

# AVARIS

THE CAPITAL OF THE HYKSOS

*Recent Excavations at Tell el-Dab<sup>c</sup>a*





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## THE CAPITAL OF THE HYKSOS

*Recent Excavations at Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup>*

The first Raymond and Beverly Sackler Foundation  
Distinguished Lecture in Egyptology

MANFRED BIETAK

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*Front cover:* Aegean gold pendant from Tell el-Dab<sup>c</sup>a

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## Preface

This volume has been made possible by the generosity of the Raymond and Beverly Sackler Foundation, which in 1991 gave an endowment to the British Museum to fund an annual Distinguished Lecture in Egyptology. The inaugural lecture in the series was delivered in July 1992 by Professor Manfred Bietak of the University of Vienna, who gave a splendid account of his remarkable excavations at Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup> in the Nile Delta, now identified as the site of ancient Avaris, capital of the Hyksos, kings of Canaanite origin, who ruled Egypt for a century or more before their expulsion at the beginning of the 18th Dynasty.

In this fully illustrated volume, Professor Bietak expands on his lecture to tell the story of Avaris as gradually revealed through his excavations. He charts the development of the site from its beginnings as a small native settlement in the Middle Kingdom through to its emergence as a great cosmopolitan city in the Second Intermediate Period, when it functioned as Egypt's gateway to the Eastern Mediterranean world and enjoyed a pivotal role as an international centre of commerce and trade. The volume culminates with the astonishing results of the most recent seasons' work, which have included the discovery of lumps of pumice originating from the volcanic eruption of the Aegean island of Santorini (Thera) and of thousands of fragments of Minoan wall-paintings, associated with the remains of a huge palatial complex, probably built by King Ahmose, founder of the New Kingdom.

We owe thanks to a number of colleagues who have contributed to the final appearance of this volume. The bulk of the editing and formatting of the text has been carried out by Dr Renée Friedman, the preparation of the camera-ready copy by Pat Terry and the mounting of the drawings by Claire Thorne. Assistance on various other aspects has been provided by Janet Peckham, Louise Schofield and Dr Jeffrey Spencer and by Barbara Adams of University College London. The final responsibility of seeing the book through into press has been that of Carolyn Jones and Julie Young of British Museum Press.

To Manfred Bietak, we express gratitude both for agreeing to give the first Raymond and Beverly Sackler Foundation Distinguished Lecture in Egyptology and for producing an account which is fully worthy of the generosity that it marks.

W V Davies  
Keeper of Egyptian Antiquities  
British Museum



## Author's Acknowledgments

I am greatly honoured to have been invited to deliver the first Raymond and Beverly Sackler Foundation Distinguished Lecture in Egyptology at the British Museum and am most grateful to Vivian Davies, Keeper of Egyptian Antiquities, for extending the invitation in the first place and for subsequently organising the preparation of my manuscript for publication.

The excavation of Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup> has been a team effort and I wish to place on record my indebtedness to the following colleagues whose combined endeavours have helped to produce the results presented below: Josef Dorner, deputy field director, who has distinguished himself as a masterful excavator and archaeological surveyor; Dieter Eigner, architectural historian; Irmgard Hein, field supervisor, who has also been responsible for the evaluation of ceramic finds; Peter Jánosi, field supervisor; Rudolfine Seeber, conservator; Gilbert Wiplinger, field architect; and our former conservator, Heinz Satzinger, who participated in the excavations for many years. Thanks are due also to numerous other colleagues whose efforts have contributed to the success of the project. For drawings in this volume I am grateful to Dieter Eigner, Liza Majerus, Christa Mlinar, Marian Negrette-Martinez, Lyla Pinch-Brock, Angela Schwab and Helga Singer.

The work at Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup> is supported by the Austrian Ministry for Science and Research, the Austrian Foundation for Science and Research and the Austrian Academy of Sciences.

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## I. Introduction

Excavations at Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup> in the eastern Nile Delta have been conducted by the Austrian Archaeological Institute, Cairo, and the Institute of Egyptology of the University of Vienna from 1966 to 1969 and from 1975 to the present.<sup>1</sup> The site has been known since 1885, when Edouard Naville made soundings for the Egypt Exploration Fund.<sup>2</sup> In 1928 Mahmud Hamza, excavating to the north of Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup> in the area of Qantir (**Fig. 1**), suggested it be identified with the site of Piramesse, the Delta residence of the 19th Dynasty and Biblical town of Ramses.<sup>3</sup> It was Labib Habachi who, after excavations to the west of Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup> as an inspector of antiquities, first advanced the theory that the site should be identified with Avaris, the capital of the Hyksos.<sup>4</sup> At the same time he endorsed the original view of Mahmud Hamza that Qantir was Piramesse, because he had retrieved portals from houses belonging to high officials of the Ramesside period from the near-by El-Didamun canal. Previously, Mahmud Hamza had found vestiges of a palace of Seti I and Ramses II at Qantir.

The majority of Egyptologists, however, followed the theory of Pierre Montet and others that Avaris and Piramesse were located at Tanis (**Fig. 1**).<sup>5</sup> It is the overwhelming evidence from our many seasons of excavations that has finally changed the general opinion of scholars. Today Avaris and Piramesse are identified with Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup> and Qantir respectively. Together they cover an area of approximately 12 sq km from Qantir in the north to 'Ezbet Gayel and 'Ezbet Gezira el-Baghl in the south.

It is understandable that archaeologists and Egyptologists should have been misled for such a long time, as it is extremely difficult to tell from the appearance of the surface that this area had once been an important town in antiquity. Everything is covered by agriculture and only in a few places are there remains of ancient settlement mounds. The Delta landscape is extremely flat and offers little to help identify the topography of a site which twice in its history had been the capital of Egypt.

In a preliminary study in 1975, the course of the Pelusiac branch of the Nile was identified by the study of contour maps.<sup>6</sup> Since then my colleague Josef Dorner has drilled more than 800 bore-holes all over the area in order to study the geological

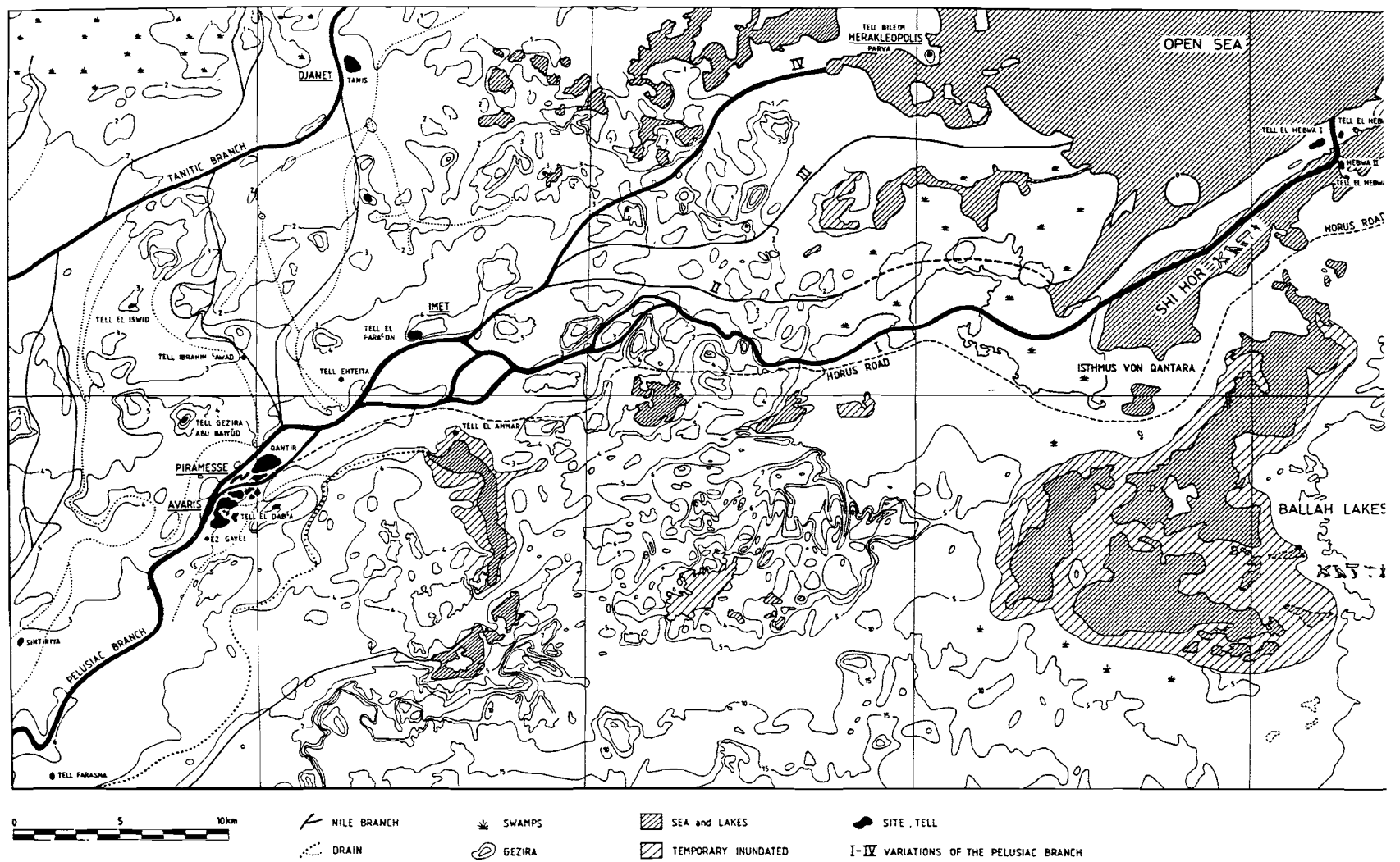


Fig. 1 Map of the eastern Delta and a reconstruction of the ancient environment and Nile branches.

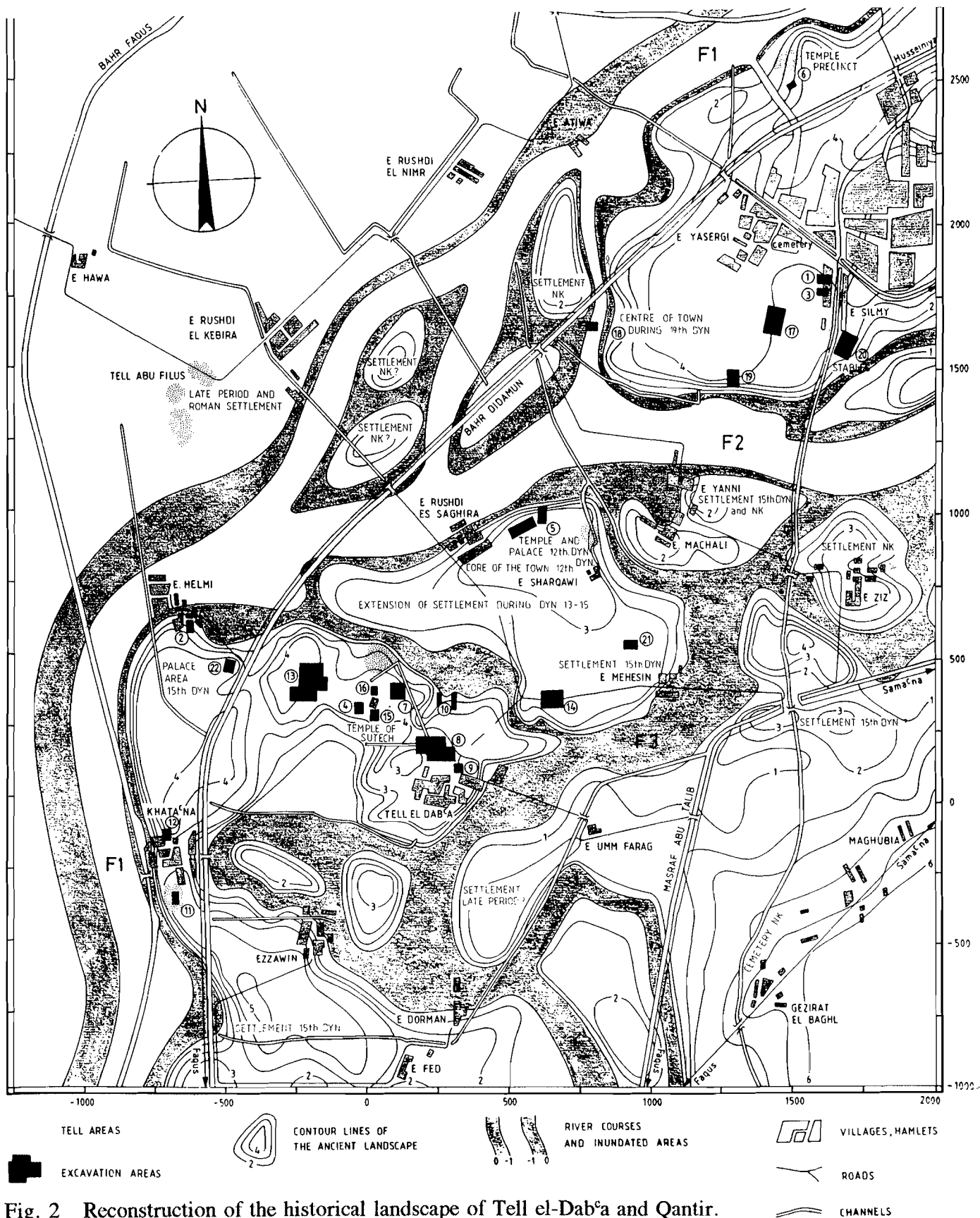


substructure beneath the agricultural crust. He has located now-buried sand mounds, so-called *geziras* or 'turtle-backs', which were excellent areas for settlement, as they stayed above the annual Nile inundation, and has found ancient Nile channels, which have been dated with the help of ceramic fragments retrieved from the bore-holes. As a result, it is now clear that Qantir, which had been the core of Piramesse, was situated on an island surrounded on both sides by two deviations of the Pelusiac branch of the Nile, while Avaris rested upon several turtle-backs to the south of deviation F2 of the Pelusiac branch (Fig. 2).<sup>7</sup>

Of course, it is not possible to excavate an area of 12 sq km in a few years, indeed not even in a thousand years. It is only possible to choose a limited area which looks significant from a topographical point of view on the basis of a reconstruction of the primeval landscape. As modern rural settlements are expanding rapidly, we invited the Pelizaeus-Museum, Hildesheim, to participate in our research and concentrate its investigations in the north, in the centre of Piramesse,<sup>8</sup> while our Institute is presently excavating primarily in the south, in the area of ancient Avaris.

Our previous topographical research revealed that Avaris and Piramesse once lay in a strategic area, their location on the navigable Pelusiac branch of the Nile giving them access to the Mediterranean Sea (Fig. 1). To the east, the area was protected by the enormous Bahr el-Baqar drainage system. To the north, an opening in this drainage system allowed the land road from northern Sinai, the so-called 'Horus Road', to continue towards the sites.<sup>9</sup> Thus the land route and the sea route met at the north-eastern door into the Nile Delta and this area was controlled by the sites of Avaris and Piramesse.

Osteological studies by the late Joachim Boessneck and by Angela von den Driesch from the University of Munich have shown that an environment with abundant wildlife existed around Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup> in the second millennium BC. The remains of a variety of aquatic animals, such as hippopotami and crocodiles, an enormous quantity of fish and the richest assortment of birds one could imagine, give us a glimpse of what the environment of the site must have been like. Antelope, gazelle, probably even wild boar and wild cattle were still present in the marshes to the east of Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup>.<sup>10</sup> This



evidence shows that agriculture had not yet completely reclaimed the primeval land, even by the Second Intermediate Period and the New Kingdom. In addition, Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup> has revealed a rich stratigraphy of occupational debris dating from the beginning of the 12th Dynasty down to the Ramesside and Third Intermediate Periods; in other words, more than one millennium of settlement activity can be studied here (see **Fig. 3**).

The oldest known settlement was situated to the south of deviation F2 of the Pelusiac branch of the Nile near modern °Ezbet Rushdi (**Fig. 2, no. 5**). It was a foundation of Amenemhat I, the first king of the 12th Dynasty (c. 1963-1934 BC) and included a temple, which was excavated by Shehata Adam of the Department of Antiquities (**Fig. 4**).<sup>11</sup> Most probably the settlement was a royal domain of modest size, perhaps no more than 20,000-40,000 sq m. The temple was situated directly on the banks of the Pelusiac branch, while the settlement was located at the northern end of one of the most spacious turtle-backs in the area; in due course it expanded towards the south.

On the next adjoining turtle-back to the south was found a planned orthogonal settlement, which provided shelter for the workmen involved in the construction of this royal domain (**Fig. 2, no. 13; Fig. 5**). In many ways, this settlement resembles the famous Kahun settlement at the Pyramid of Senusret II near the entrance to the Faiyum. According to ceramic seriation, our settlement covered the period from Amenemhat I to Senusret I.<sup>12</sup> After the new town at °Ezbet Rushdi (**Fig. 2, no. 5**) was completed, this labourers' settlement was abandoned. Towards the end of the 12th Dynasty, the town expanded to the south (**Fig. 2**) and quickly covered the northern halves of the two major turtle-backs, with an estimated extent of 75 hectares (= 750 sq metres) by the beginning of the 13th Dynasty. The archaeological and anthropological evidence indicates that the settlers were not Egyptians but people from nearby Canaan, albeit highly Egyptianised. We may suppose, however, that in the core of the 12th Dynasty town-site at °Ezbet Rushdi Egyptian administrators and an Egyptian upper class continued to live. Excavation of this part of the town is planned for the future.

In the central part of the settlement in area F/I (**Fig. 2, no. 13**), an administrative palace of the early 13th Dynasty was found (**Fig. 18**). During this dynasty the settlement



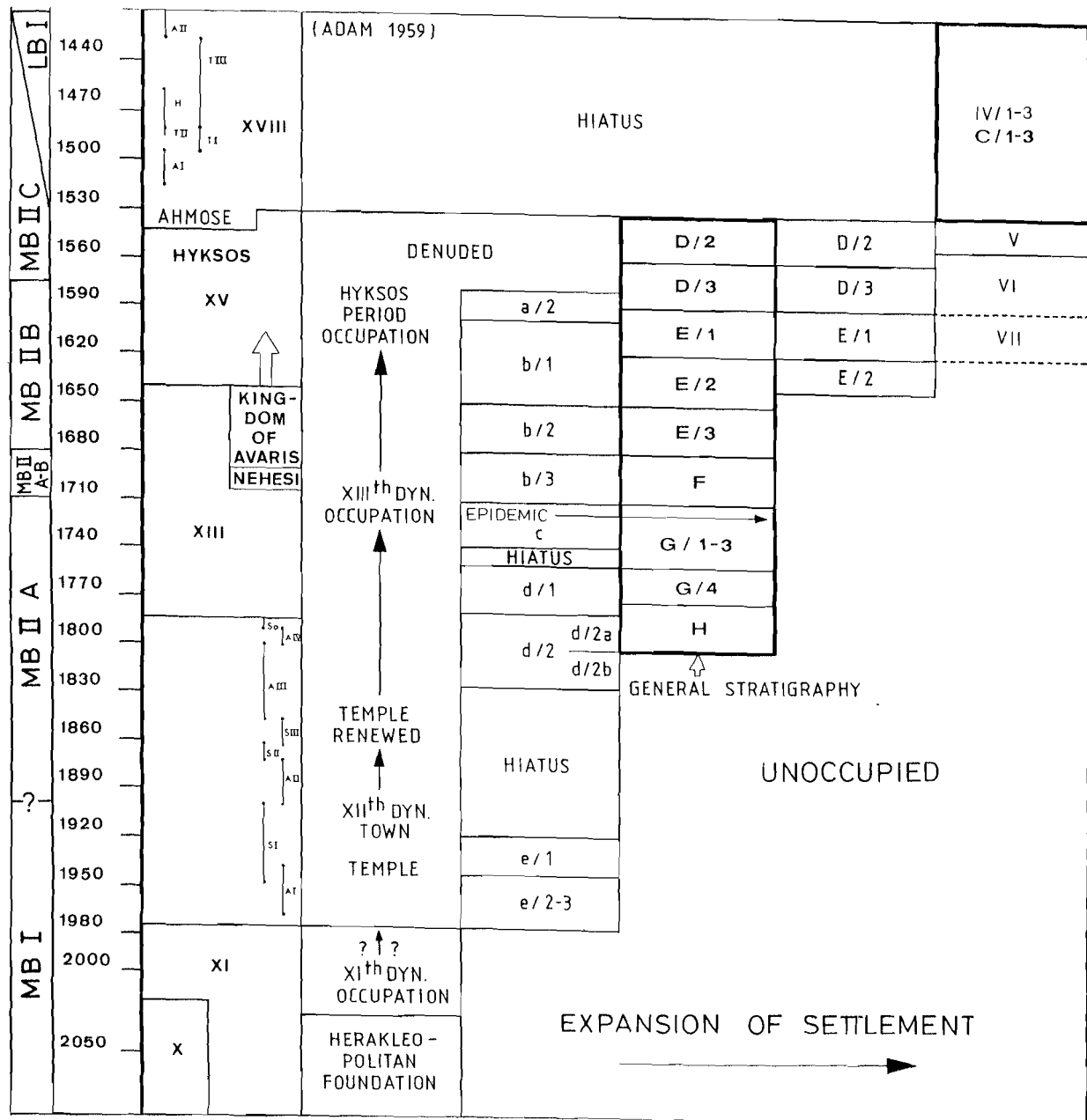


Fig. 3 Schematic stratigraphy of Avaris.

continued to expand and it soon covered the area to Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup>. During the Hyksos period the site again doubled in size; soon the turtle-back to the south of °Ezbet Rushdi was covered as far as °Ezbet Mehesin. Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup> was completely settled at this time; in addition, the turtle-back to the north of Khata<sup>n</sup>a near °Ezbet Helmi (**Fig. 2, no. 2**) was covered by something like a citadel. This spot, for one reason or another, had not previously been settled, although it occupies a prominent position and offered a wonderful view of the bifurcating flow of the Pelusiac branch of the Nile. The turtle-back to the south of Khata<sup>n</sup>a up to Ezzawin was also now covered by settlement. During the Hyksos period the settlement attained a size of 250 hectares (=2.5 sq km), three times the size of Hazor, the largest contemporary site in Palestine. This expansion shows clearly that a provincial settlement had become a provincial centre and finally one of the largest towns of Egypt during the Second Intermediate Period. Its size alone makes its identification with Avaris, the capital of Egypt during the Hyksos period (c.1650-1540 BC), very likely. Similarly, the stratigraphy (**Fig. 3**) reveals the dramatic development of the town, which will be briefly summarised.

The 12th Dynasty settlement at °Ezbet Rushdi probably goes back to a foundation of a king of the Herakleopolitan Period. A stela from the temple of °Ezbet Rushdi mentions a foundation with the name 'the door of the two roads of Khety', the latter a popular royal name during that period.<sup>13</sup> This foundation has yet to be located; it is probably in the vicinity of °Ezbet Rushdi, where, as already noted, Shehata Adam excavated a temple of Amenemhat I, which was subsequently enlarged and renewed under Senusret III (**Fig. 2, no. 5**). The site of area F/I (**Fig. 2, no. 13**) also contains evidence of occupation during the early 12th Dynasty in the form of the labourers' settlement, followed by a hiatus until the late 12th Dynasty when it was resettled by Canaanites. The turtle-back of Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup> (**Fig. 2, no. 8**) shows signs of thin occupation during the late 12th Dynasty. Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup>, which was only the eastern part of the whole settlement (area AI-IV), was more substantially settled during the 13th Dynasty (stratum G) and was afterwards partly abandoned, perhaps as the result of an epidemic, signs of which may be discerned in some of the excavated remains (see below). The north-eastern outskirts

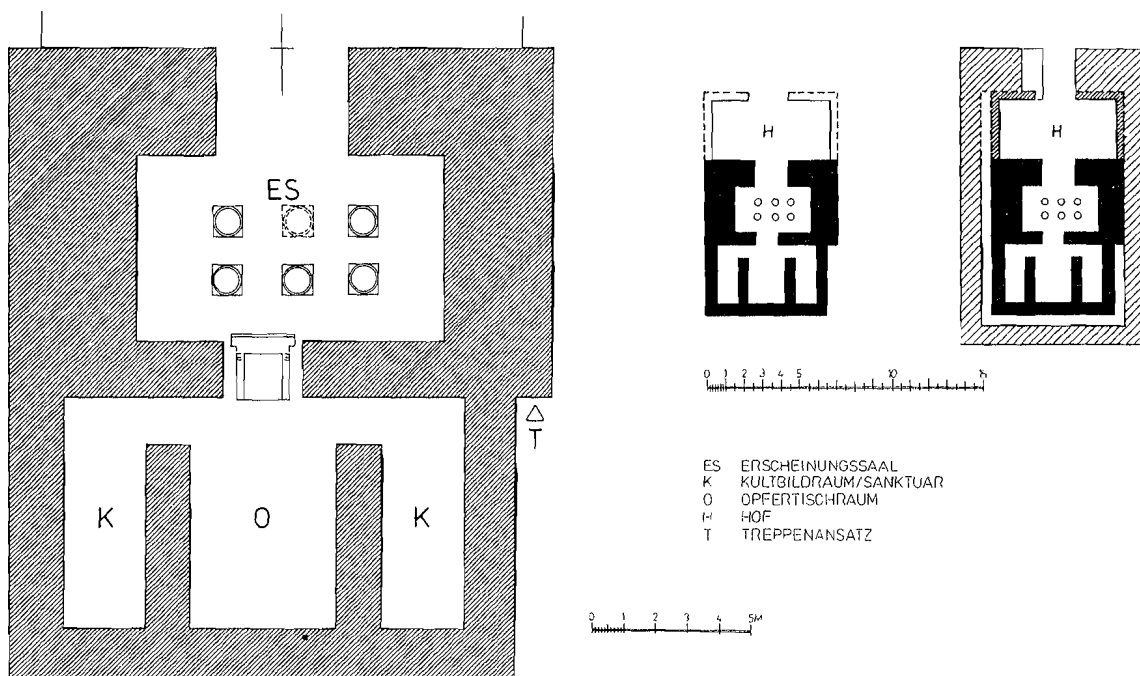


Fig. 4 The temple of 'Ezbet Rushdi  
(adapted, with additions, from Adam 1959: Plan 2).

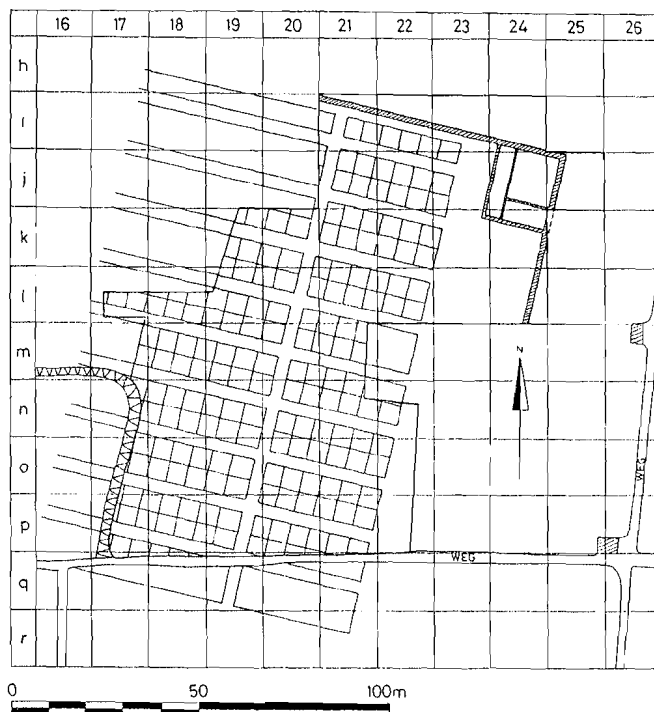


Fig. 5 Plan of the orthogonal settlement  
of the early 12th Dynasty.

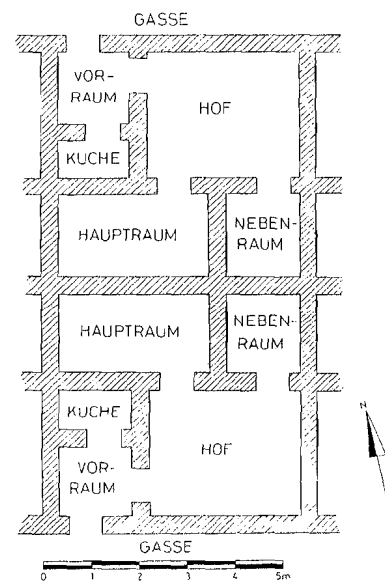


Fig. 6 House belonging to  
the orthogonal settlement.



of Avaris, near °Ezbet Mehesin, and the southern part of the turtle-back in the neighbourhood of Ezzawin, were only occupied at the beginning of the Hyksos period. The same is true for site E at Khata°na and H/I along the Pelusiac branch of the Nile, the only place where settlement continued into the 18th Dynasty.

## II. The planned settlement of the early 12th Dynasty

This settlement, in area F/I, two or three strata of which have been partly uncovered, was constructed of mud-bricks initially laid out along a very regular orthogonal plan (**Fig. 5**). The living units (**Fig. 6, Plate 1, A**), each covering only 10 x 10 cubits (= c. 25 sq m), were built together in long rectangular blocks. The streets between the blocks were only 10 cubits wide. To the north, an enclosure wall was found.

The exact extent of this settlement is uncertain. On present estimates it could have accommodated more than a thousand inhabitants. Finds such as spinning bowls suggest that the inhabitants included women as well as men. It is very likely that labourers and their families were settled here during the foundation of the royal domain at °Ezbet Rushdi. A large number of them seem to have abandoned the settlement and perhaps moved into the newly constructed town during the reign of Amenemhat I. The remaining settlers expanded their houses, so that in due course this orthogonal settlement became increasingly irregular, until it was completely abandoned some time during the reign of Senusret I. The eastern part of the settlement contained an unoccupied area, probably reserved for keeping flocks during the night. Coarsely fired hand-made cooking pots of Syro-Palestinian Middle Bronze I (MBI) type show that there was contact with nomads, who had moved into the eastern Delta before the Middle Kingdom or who visited the area from the Eastern Desert.<sup>14</sup> No social differentiation is discernible in the excavated portion of the settlement. It is highly likely, however, that houses of a higher standard will be found in the as yet unexcavated parts.

In order to obtain a clearer idea of the relationship of this labourers' settlement to the settlement at °Ezbet Rushdi, excavations will have to be resumed there in the future. The town of °Ezbet Rushdi (which bore the ancient name *Hwt-Imn-m-ḥ3t-m3<sup>c</sup>-ḥrw-*

*nt-R3-w3ty*, 'the settlement of Amenemhat (I), justified, of Rowaty', according to a stela of Senusret III found in the temple there)<sup>15</sup> was not important until the later part of the 12th Dynasty. It seems that Senusret III took an interest in this town and together with other administrative reforms introduced a more rigorous policy toward settlements in the eastern Delta. An inscribed doorway of Amenemhat I (**Plate 27, A**), found at °Ezbet Helmi but no doubt transported there from the site of °Ezbet Rushdi, bears on its inner side a renewal inscription of Senusret III. According to Kees, the site gained in importance as a result of Egyptian mining expeditions to Sinai and of trade with the Levant.<sup>16</sup> Proof of this growing importance is to be found within the settlement strata in area F/I and in the enormous expansion of the settlement during the late 12th and early 13th Dynasties.

### **III. The initial settlement of Canaanites at Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup>**

Within excavation area F/I (**Fig. 2, no. 13**) there are remains of an open settlement, which had rapidly expanded to the south. In an earlier phase within stratum H (= d/2), there was a thick, undulating enclosure wall (**Fig. 7**). This enclosure had been used for a short time only and had then been covered by later structures of the same stratum. The houses of this settlement reveal that the settlers were not Egyptians but people from the Levant. According to Eigner, the layout of the houses resembles closely both the 'Mittelsaalhaus' (**Fig. 8**) and the 'Breitraumhaus'<sup>17</sup> - ancient architectural types which occur in northern Syria in the second half of the fourth millennium BC. A 'Mittelsaalhaus' was also an element of the palace of Mari (**Fig. 9**), which was approximately contemporary with the settlement of Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup>. The settlement also included cemeteries, some of them directly attached to houses - a burial custom foreign to Egypt and obviously derived from the Syro-Palestinian Middle Bronze Age culture.<sup>18</sup>

Whereas the houses and cemeteries display foreign features, the construction of the tombs is purely Egyptian. The same is true of the material culture. Only 20 per cent of the pottery from the settlement debris was of Syro-Palestinian Middle Bronze Age type; the majority of the ceramics was Egyptian. Yet, from the tombs, which were

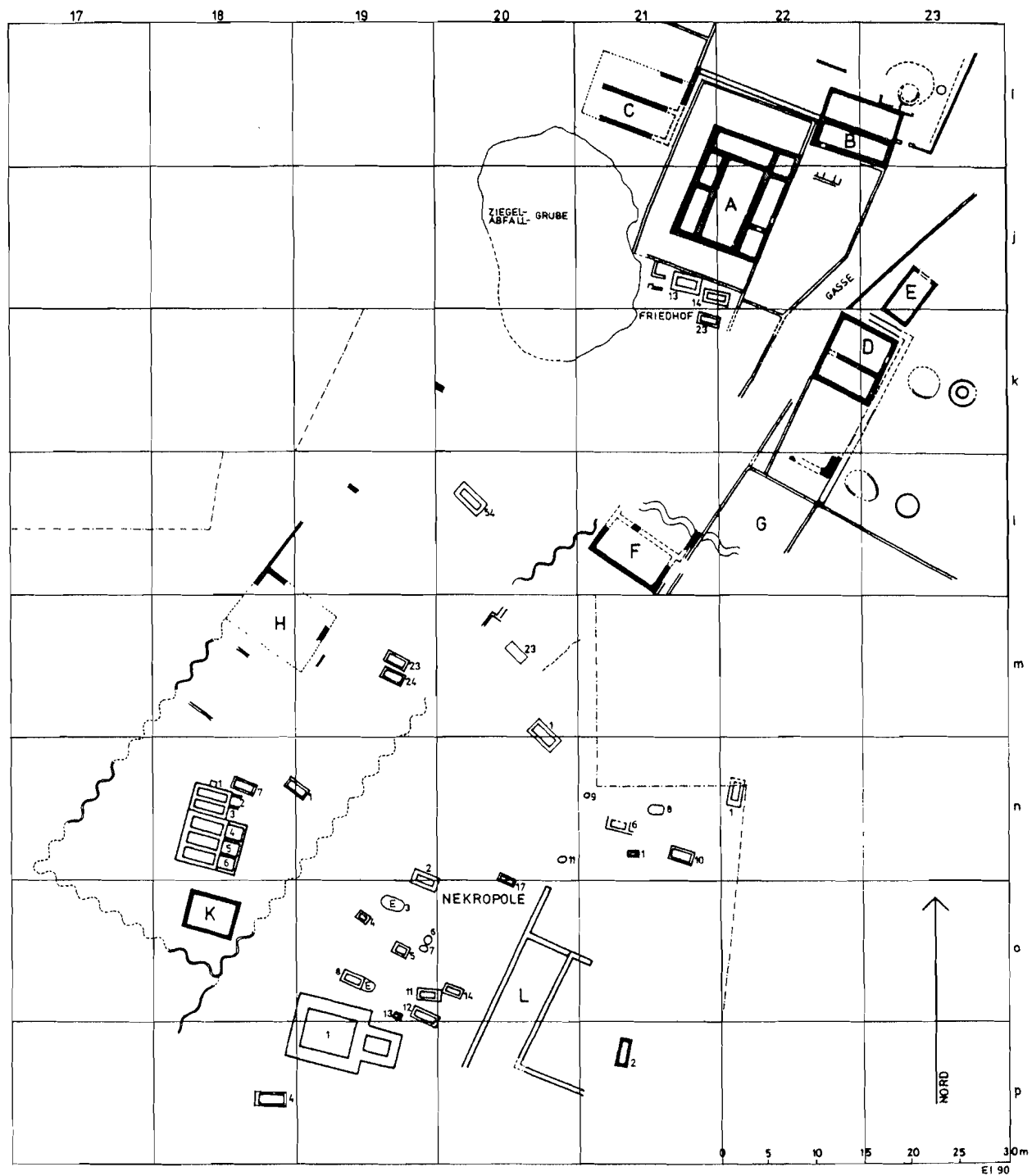


Fig. 7 Settlement of the late 12th Dynasty (area F/I, stratum d/2).

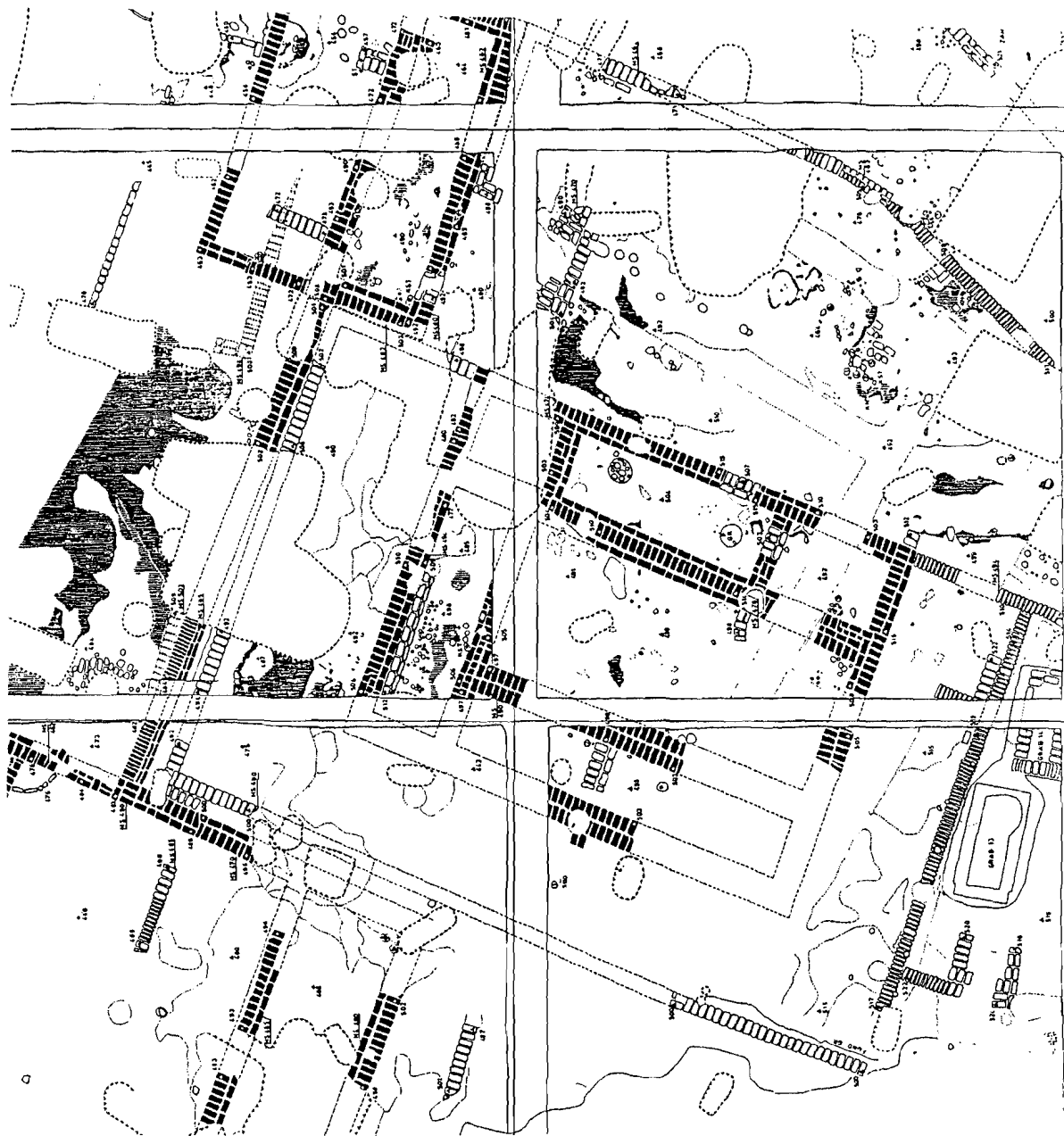


Fig. 8 A Syrian 'Mittelsaalhaus' from the settlement of the late 12th Dynasty.



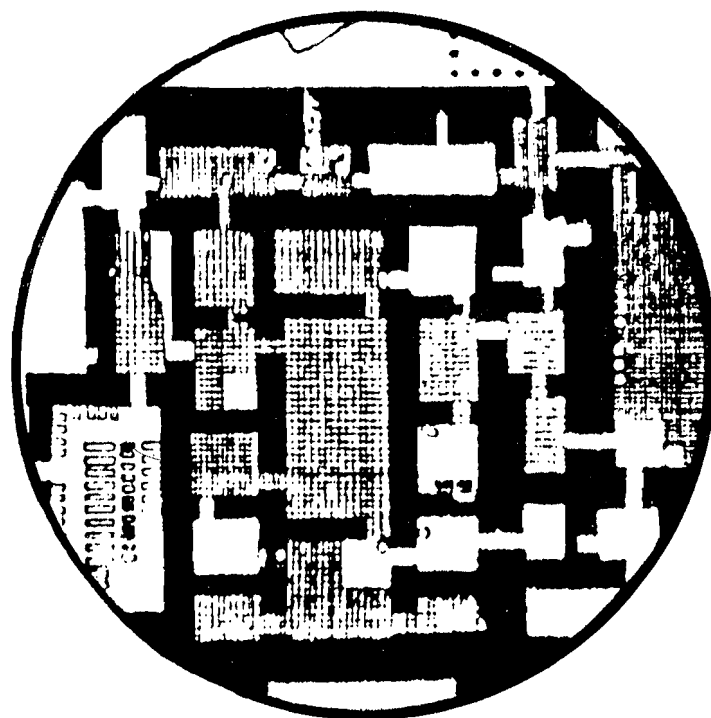
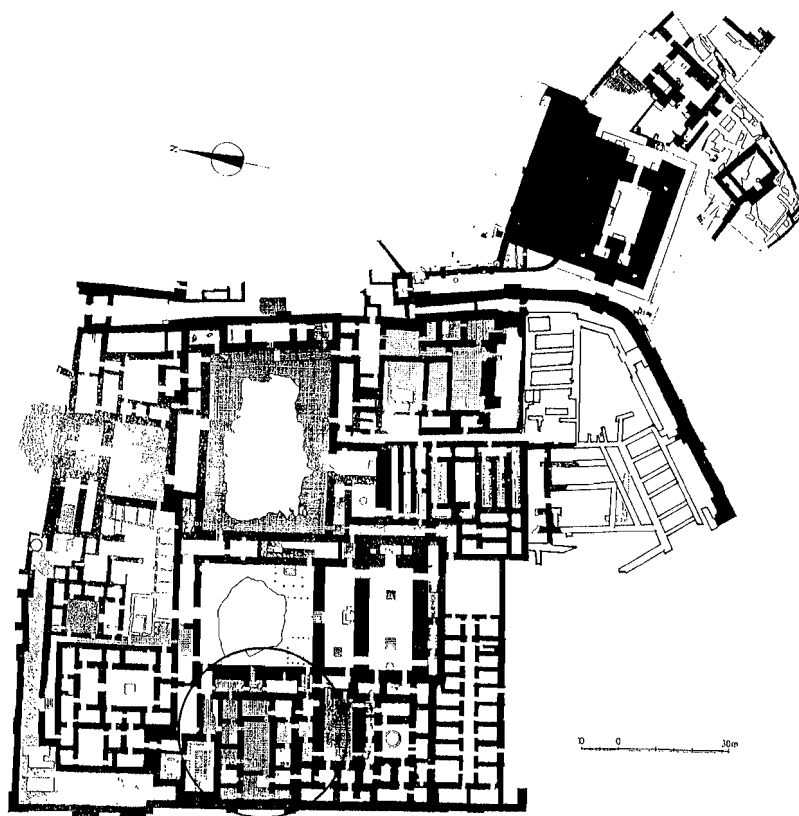


Fig. 9 The palace of Mari with 'Mittelsaalhaus' elements encircled

of the male population at this time worked as soldiers for the Egyptian crown.

The use of foreigners as soldiers was an old tradition in ancient Egypt, going back at least to the time of the Old Kingdom. Soldiers of Asiatic and Nubian origin were also in service during the First Intermediate Period assisting in the unification attempts by various nomarchs and by the kings of the 10th and 11th Dynasties. Tomb-scenes at Beni Hasan indicate that, by the early 12th Dynasty, people from Canaan, most likely nomads who had entered Egypt via the Nile Delta, were being similarly employed (Fig. 12, A-C).<sup>19</sup> These representations show that they carried their own native weaponry. The same is true for the warriors at Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup>. As a rule they were equipped with two javelins, battle-axes and daggers. Most of the tombs were plundered and few bronze implements escaped the attention of the thieves. However, because of the restricted size of the burial chambers, the javelin heads were often hidden by the bricks blocking the chamber and remained in situ, while the other tomb equipment was taken away. One tomb, however, already cited above, yielded a wonderful example of a duckbill-axe and an embossed belt of bronze (Fig. 11; Plate 2, A-B).

While some of the Asiatics who settled in Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup> may originally have been nomads, most seem to have come from an urban background. Certainly the custom of placing the cemeteries within the settlement is not nomadic. The origin of a part of the population appears to have been the coastal Levant, most probably the region around Byblos. The latter was, after all, Egypt's major partner for trading enterprises in the Near East.

What exactly was the role of these Asiatic settlers in the north-eastern Nile Delta? Military service in this corner of Egypt was surely only one of their functions. We have evidence of specialised Asiatic settlements around the Middle Kingdom royal residence *Itj-t3wy* from texts in the Illahun archives, especially from the reign of Amenemhat III,<sup>20</sup> but we do not know very much about the nature of these settlements and we must, therefore, look elsewhere for help in answering the question. Inscriptions on stelae placed

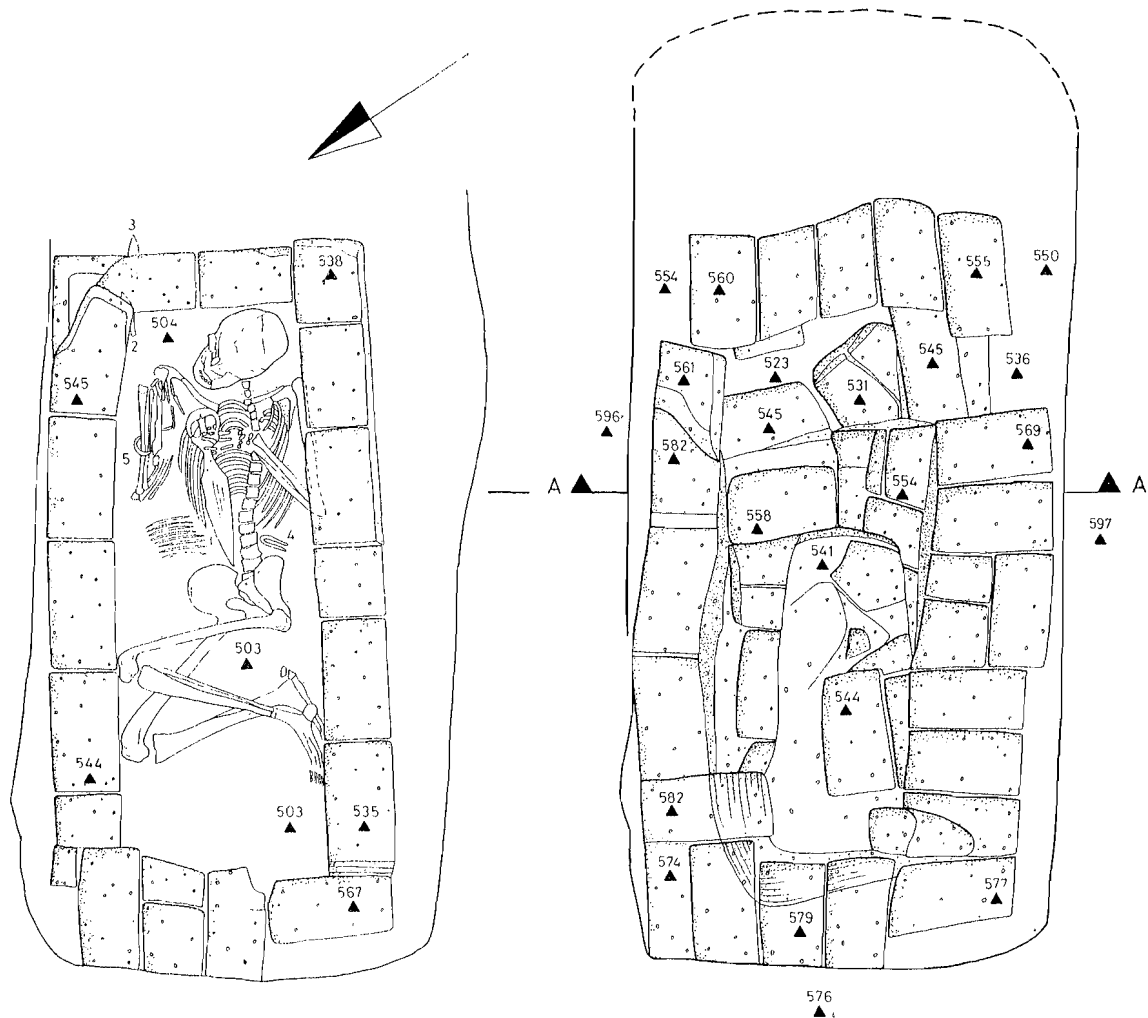


Fig. 10 Tomb F/I-o/20-no. 17: Grave of warrior with dagger.

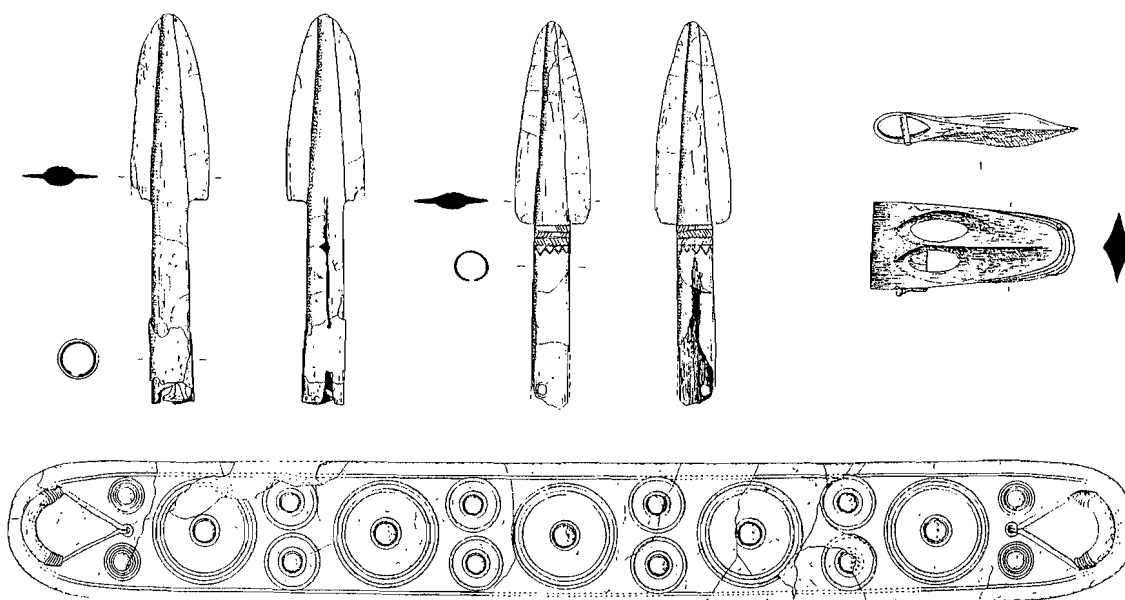
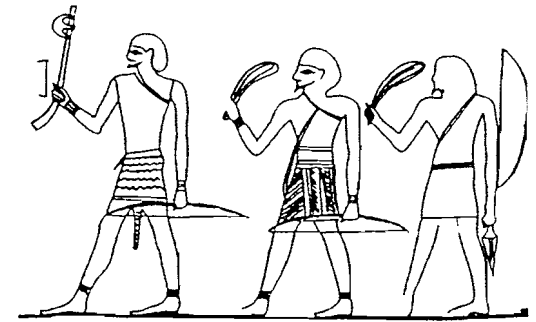
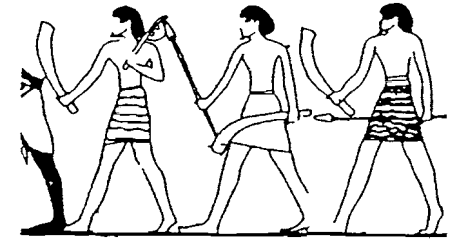


Fig. 12, A-B Asiatic soldiers as represented in tombs 14 and 2 at Beni Hasan. (Newberry 1893: pls. 47, 16).

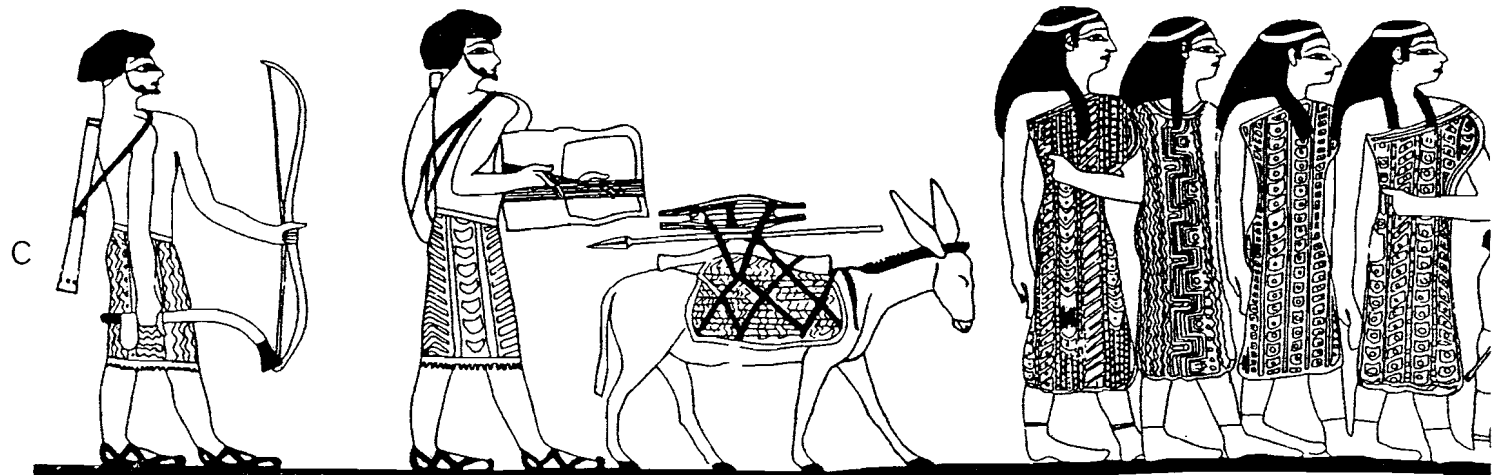


A

Fig. 12, C Bedouin, one carrying what is probably a duck-bill axe (left) and another holding a socketed lance (right). From tomb 3 at Beni Hasan (Newberry 1893: pl. 31).



B



C



Fig. 13, A-B

Representations of the brother of the prince of Retenu from stelae at Serabit el-Khadim (Gardiner, Peet and Černý 1952: pls. 39 and 85).



A

Fig. 14

An obelisk-shaped stela from Serabit el-Khadim with representations of Asiatic soldiers wearing mushroom-shaped hairstyles and carrying duck-bill axes (Gardiner, Peet and Černý 1952: pl. 51, no. 163).



B

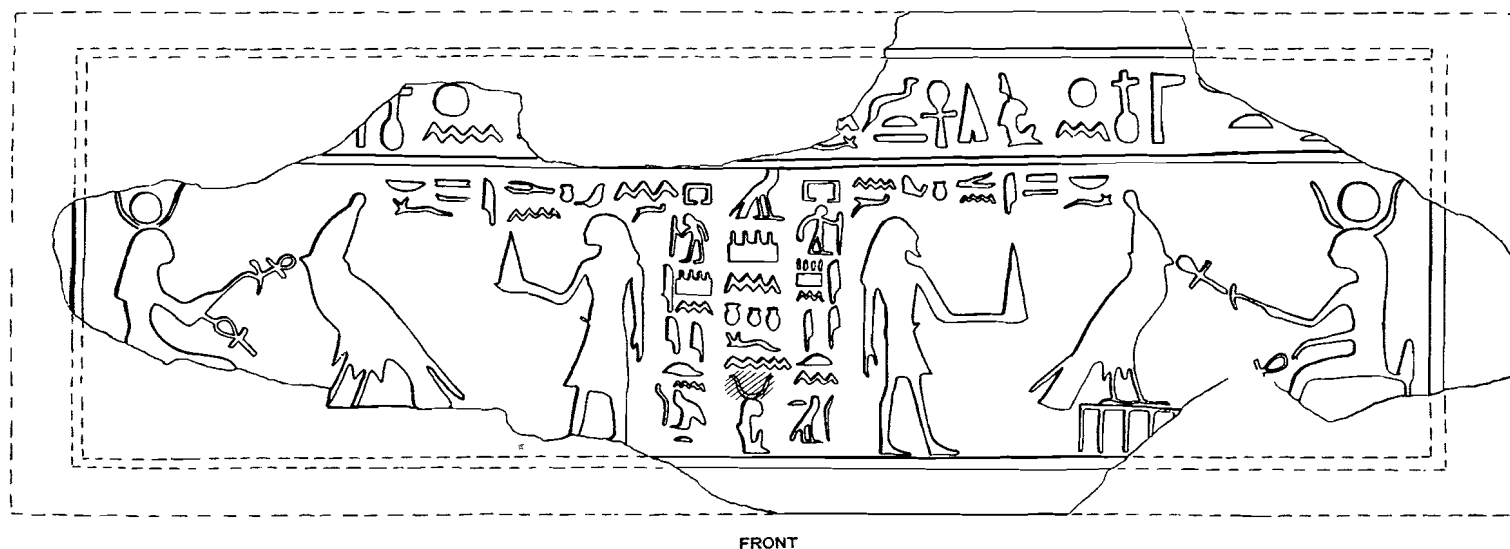
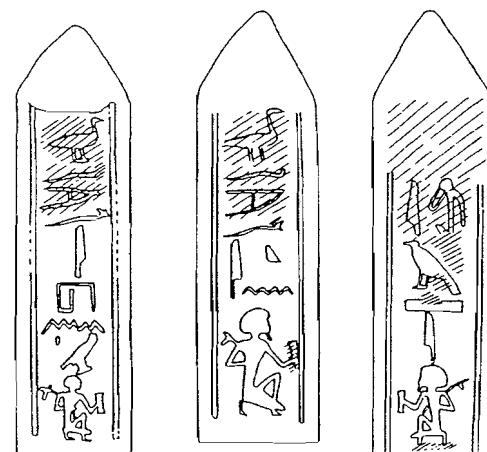


Fig. 15 Representation of the deputy chief steward Imeny, the son of an Asiatic lady, on an offering table from Serabit el-Khadim (Gardiner, Peet and Černý 1952: pl. 30, no. 95).

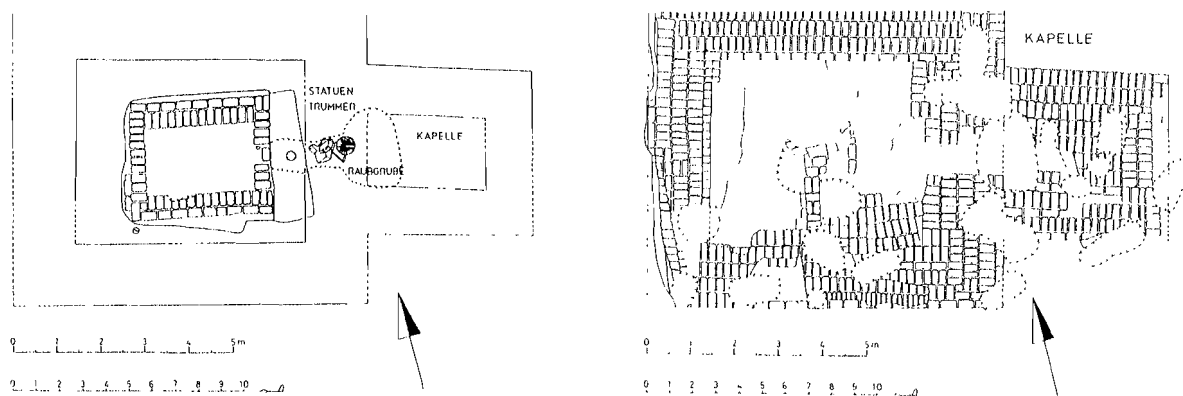


Fig. 16 Tomb F/I-p/19-no. 1, with a chapel in front of a nearly square superstructure.

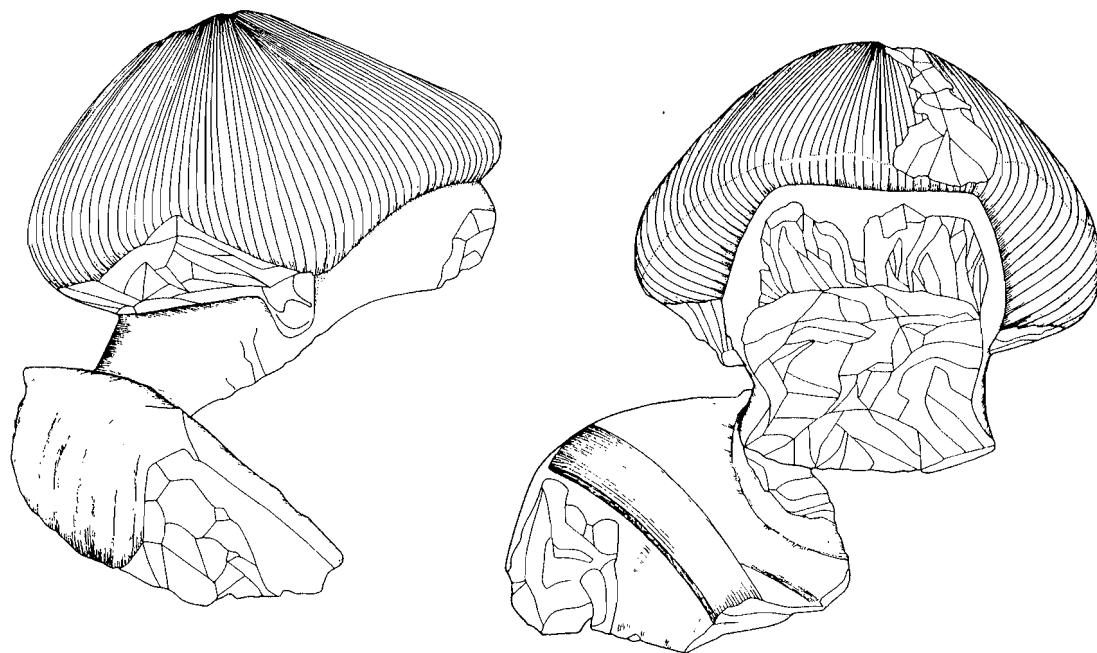


Fig. 17 Fragmentary remains of a colossal seated statue of an Asiatic dignitary.



of the 12th and 13th Dynasties for a similar purpose. The location of the settlement - in the north-eastern Delta along the Pelusiac branch of the Nile - means that it was ideally placed for use as a harbour for Egyptian trade with the Near East. Indicative here is the enormous amount of imported ceramics found at the site. With the help of statistics it is possible to estimate that roughly two million amphorae, broken and whole, are buried at Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup>. Such a quantity could not have arrived on donkey-back via northern Sinai but must have come by ship. Scientific investigation of the contents of the amphorae, carried out by the University of Tübingen, has shown that among the commodities imported were olive oil and most probably also wine. All this provides added insight into the great intensity of sea traffic in the eastern Mediterranean during this period. Of course, it was not only Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup> that received large quantities of goods in such amphorae. The whole of Egypt was in need of these commodities. Many amphora-fragments have also been recovered from late Middle Kingdom strata at Memphis<sup>29</sup> and in settlement debris surrounding the pyramid of Amenemhat III at Dahshur.<sup>30</sup>

Finally, it should be noted that belonging either to the earliest settlement, dating to the late 12th Dynasty, or to the next stratum above it, is a tomb composed of a nearly square superstructure with a chapel on the eastern side (**Fig. 16; Plate 3, A-B**), in which we made a very interesting discovery. Within a robber's pit sunk into the chapel (**Plate 4, A**) we found fragments of a colossal statue of limestone depicting an Asiatic dignitary with a mushroom-shaped coiffure holding a throwstick at his right shoulder (**Fig. 17; Plate 4, B-C**).<sup>31</sup> It was a seated statue, nearly twice life-size, of excellent quality. The hair was painted red while the colour of the skin was yellow, the traditional colour of Asiatics in Egyptian art. The form of this statue has no parallels in Egypt. A similar figure is known, however, from the palace of Eblā, dating approximately to the same period (eighteenth century BC).<sup>32</sup> It was made in a much cruder fashion, but once again it is a seated statue of a dignitary with a throwstick held against the shoulder.

Our statue was smashed intentionally, suggesting that there was political turmoil in the region. It is unclear whether this tomb belonged to the 'Mittelsaalhaus', which could be considered a predecessor of the palace of the early 13th Dynasty in the stratum above, or whether it belonged to this palace. From its position in relation to the 'Mittelsaalhaus' and to the other tombs of stratum d/2, Eigner considers it probable that it belongs to stratum d/2 of the late 12th Dynasty.

#### **IV. The palace of the early 13th Dynasty and its Asiatic functionaries**

In the next stratum above, a palace of the early 13th Dynasty was uncovered during the years 1979-89.<sup>33</sup> The structure was not built as a unit but developed from a huge mansion. Its layout is purely Egyptian. Originally the palace (**Fig. 18; Plates 5-6**) consisted of a reception-room (M1) with four columns,<sup>34</sup> a bedroom (S1) and a magazine. Behind the reception-room there was a robing-room (A). Later, in front of this mansion, which was accessible through a portico, a spacious court (H) was erected and lined along its four sides with columns. The courtyard partly covered an older phase of this palace, showing that its western magazine was originally much larger. In front of this courtyard a bipartite entrance building (T1) was constructed, which originally had an open portico to the north. This element was later enclosed, perhaps due to the cool northerly winds of the Delta. In front of this portico there was a garden laid out like the board of a Senet game,<sup>35</sup> which was probably played on with live figures. The spectators, surely the owners of the palace, would have sat under the portico in the shade watching or directing the game.

Entrance into the building was not gained centrally but along the two sides via corridors. The right corridor led toward the central part of the large courtyard (H) and on to the entrance into the reception room. The left corridor was for the servants and originally led to a corridor and a staircase to an upper floor or upper canopy. In the midst of the central courtyard a kind of pool was constructed or at least planned. It was fed by a channel, constructed of burned bricks, sunk in a trench beneath the floor (**Plates 7, A-**

out (Plate 7, C).

Later the palace was enlarged and the entire system was changed. The entrance was diverted toward the east via a square room with two columns (V) and this axis led to another courtyard, south of which another palace was constructed. This new palace had a reception-room with probably six columns (M), a bedroom (S) and a robing-room. This part was never finished. To the north of this second palace there was a garden (G) with flower-beds set in a regular pattern. To the north of the flower-beds the remains of a kiosk (K) were found.

To the south of the palace, surrounded by an enclosure wall, we uncovered two strata of gardens (Plate 8, A-B). The older garden consisted of squares lined by trees. In the midst a pool had been planned but was never finished. Another square of trees had been started to the east. Between both squares a regular pattern of flower-beds had been planted. Even the irrigation ditches for watering trees and plants have been found (Plate 8, C). Another garden was located to the west of the enclosure wall and was probably connected with the domestic farm-land of the palace. This was not a garden for recreation but a more practical type, most probably a vineyard to judge from the pattern of pits. Even the substructure of something which could have been a wine-press was discovered.<sup>36</sup>

Later the gardens were used as a cemetery for the functionaries of the palace. In addition to the tomb of the dignitary already discussed above, two other series of tombs were found. South of the original palace we found a series of six tombs with chambers, sunk into huge pits (Fig. 18). The chambers showed purely Egyptian constructional techniques. The superstructures, although only preserved in their foundations, also look like Egyptian tomb chapels and most probably resembled the minor brick mastabas of the Archaic Period and the Old Kingdom or the cenotaphs of the Middle Kingdom found at Abydos.<sup>37</sup> Parallel to the six tombs we found six tree-pits at a distance of about 9 m to the east. It is obvious that each pit belonged to a tomb. This association seems to reflect a very archaic Egyptian funerary feature. From the 1st Dynasty onward we have



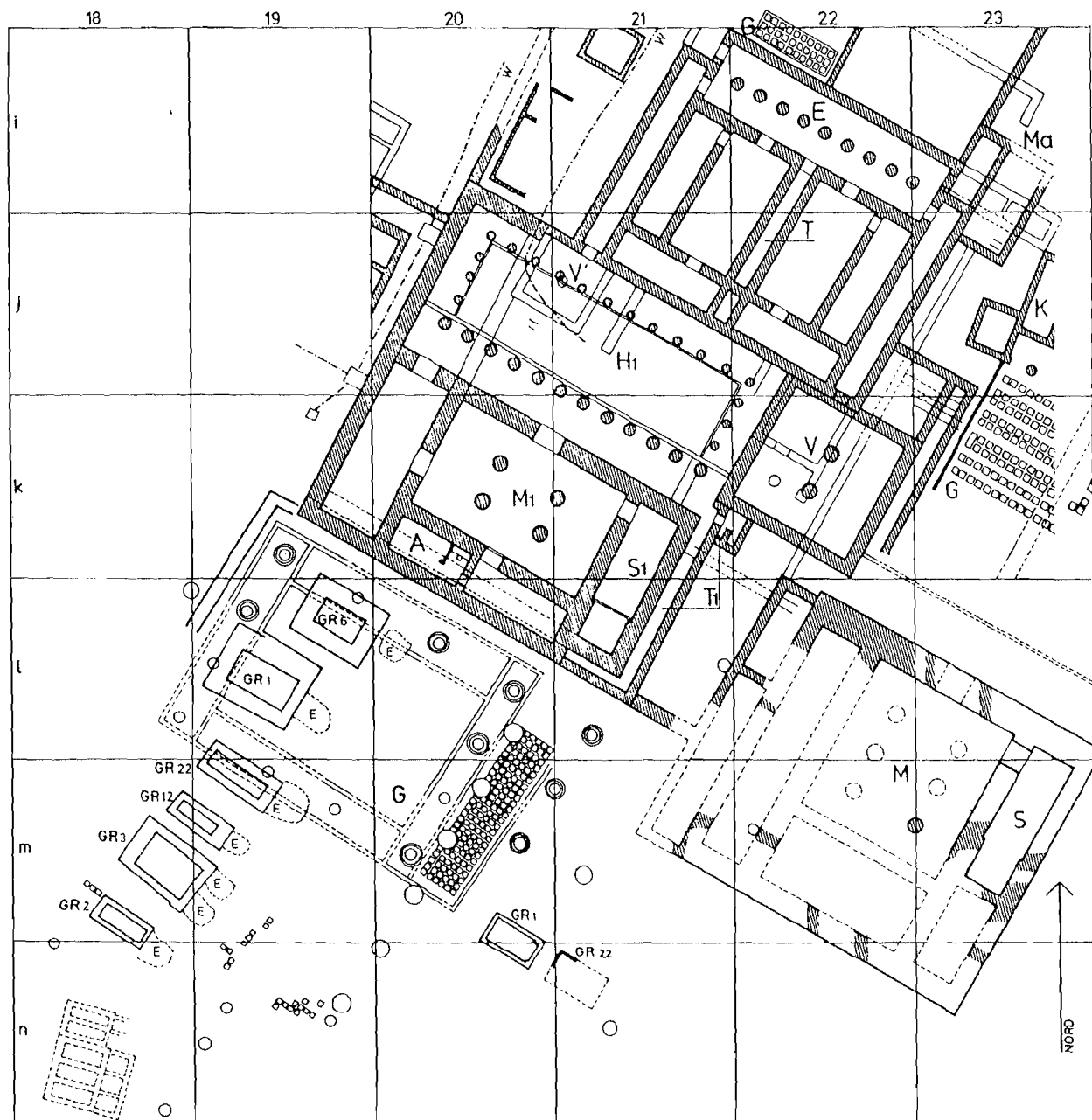
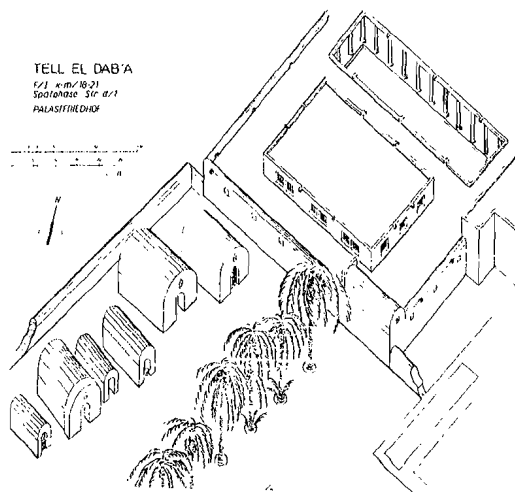


Fig. 18 Palace of the early 13th Dynasty,  
stratum d/1.

Fig. 19 Isometric reconstruction of the palace  
cemetery, reflecting the possible  
appearance of the holy precincts of  
Sais and Buto.





representations of the holy precincts of Buto and Sais in which the tombs of the predynastic Lower Egyptian kings were most likely situated.<sup>38</sup> Representations show a palm tree in front of each tomb, which is depicted as a chapel with a vault-like roof. Thus, it seems likely that within the palace necropolis the Butic tomb tradition, with a series of tombs and associated palm trees, was adopted by the functionaries of the palace (**Fig. 19**).<sup>39</sup> Although ancient Egyptian royal funerary features may be recognised within this necropolis, the direct proximity of the tombs to the palace is certainly an Asiatic tradition, despite the fact that the best parallels for this come from the Late Bronze Age. Tombs of mayors of the late 12th and 13th Dynasties have also been found in the vicinity of their administrative palaces at Bubastis. The cemetery at Bubastis, however, is not directly attached to the palace. It is separated by an enclosure wall. Even so, a parallel situation to Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup> exists to some extent. The second series of tombs at Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup> was also situated to the south of the second palace unit (**Fig. 18; Plate 9, A**) but this cemetery was more loosely organised.

An important feature of the tombs of both series was the burial of pairs of donkeys and sheep and goats within the entrance pits (**Figs 20-21; Plates 9, B and 10, A-B**). The burial of donkeys in front of tombs was an ancient custom originating in Mesopotamia in the third millennium and spreading from there to Syria.<sup>40</sup> It is a custom typical for a culture which depends on caravan trade. It is also known from the Middle Bronze Age culture of Palestine.<sup>41</sup> Examples are attested from Jericho, Lachish, Tell Akko and Tell Haror. However, the only close parallels for the tombs at Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup> come from Tell el-<sup>c</sup>Ajjul, south of Gaza. The burial of donkeys in pairs or even double pairs, as found at Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup> and in northern Syria, is only paralleled at Tell el-<sup>c</sup>Ajjul. At Jericho and Lachish only single burials have been attested, and the donkey at Tell Akko cannot be clearly connected with the funerary cult at all. It seems, therefore, that the custom of donkey burials in association with tombs came from northern Syria to Egypt and Tell el-<sup>c</sup>Ajjul, a site which is very closely connected with Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup>.<sup>42</sup>

We offer the interpretation that everyone in front of whose tomb an animal sacrifice had been placed was involved in caravan activity, probably as a caravan leader.

found, its pommel of ivory fitted with a gold mounting incised with lotus flowers, clearly showing cultural affinity with the Levant (**Fig. 22, 8; Plate 11, A**).<sup>43</sup> Other equipment from this tomb includes two socketed javelin heads of silver, a socketed axe-head and a curved knife (**Fig. 22, 5-7 and 10; Plate 11, B**), which also correspond to Middle Bronze Age types. There was also jewellery, such as bracelets, one of gold and amethyst (**Fig. 22, 3-4; Plate 11, C**) and an amethyst scarab mounted on a gold ring and inscribed with the title and name of the owner (**Fig. 22, 1; Plate 11, D**).<sup>44</sup> Unfortunately this scarab was damaged by tomb robbers, but the title had something to do with foreign countries. Most probably the owner was an 'overseer of foreign countries', who had responsibility for the organisation of trading expeditions by land and by sea to the Levant. The name of the tomb owner was written in a corrupt form - an indication that the command of Egyptian script on the part of the seal-cutter and his commissioner was poor. It seems that the latter had acquired the Egyptian name 'Sobekemhat'. This seal is very important because it gives us an indication of the functions of the palace dignitaries and palace tomb owners. Obviously their duties lay in foreign trade. Their origins gave them first-hand knowledge of the Levant. In another tomb of the palace cemetery (F/I-I/19-no. 1), a serpentine statuette representing an Egyptian official (**Fig. 23; Plate 12, A**) was discovered, unfortunately uninscribed. From another tomb, an impression of a seal provides a further indication of the economic background of the settlement of Tell el-Dab'a. The seal belonged to a royal treasurer and chief steward with the name 'Aya' (**Fig. 24; Plate 12, B**).

Within the northern wing of the palace, a haematite cylinder seal was found. It bears one of the oldest representations of the northern Syrian weather-god portrayed as protector of sailors and as overlord of the sea, which is represented by the snake, Yam, on a pedestal; behind the god is his companion the weather-bull (**Fig. 25; Plate 12, C-D**). According to Edith Porada, one of the foremost experts on ancient Near Eastern glyptic art, this cylinder seal displays Syrian glyptic style but was cut in Egypt and influenced

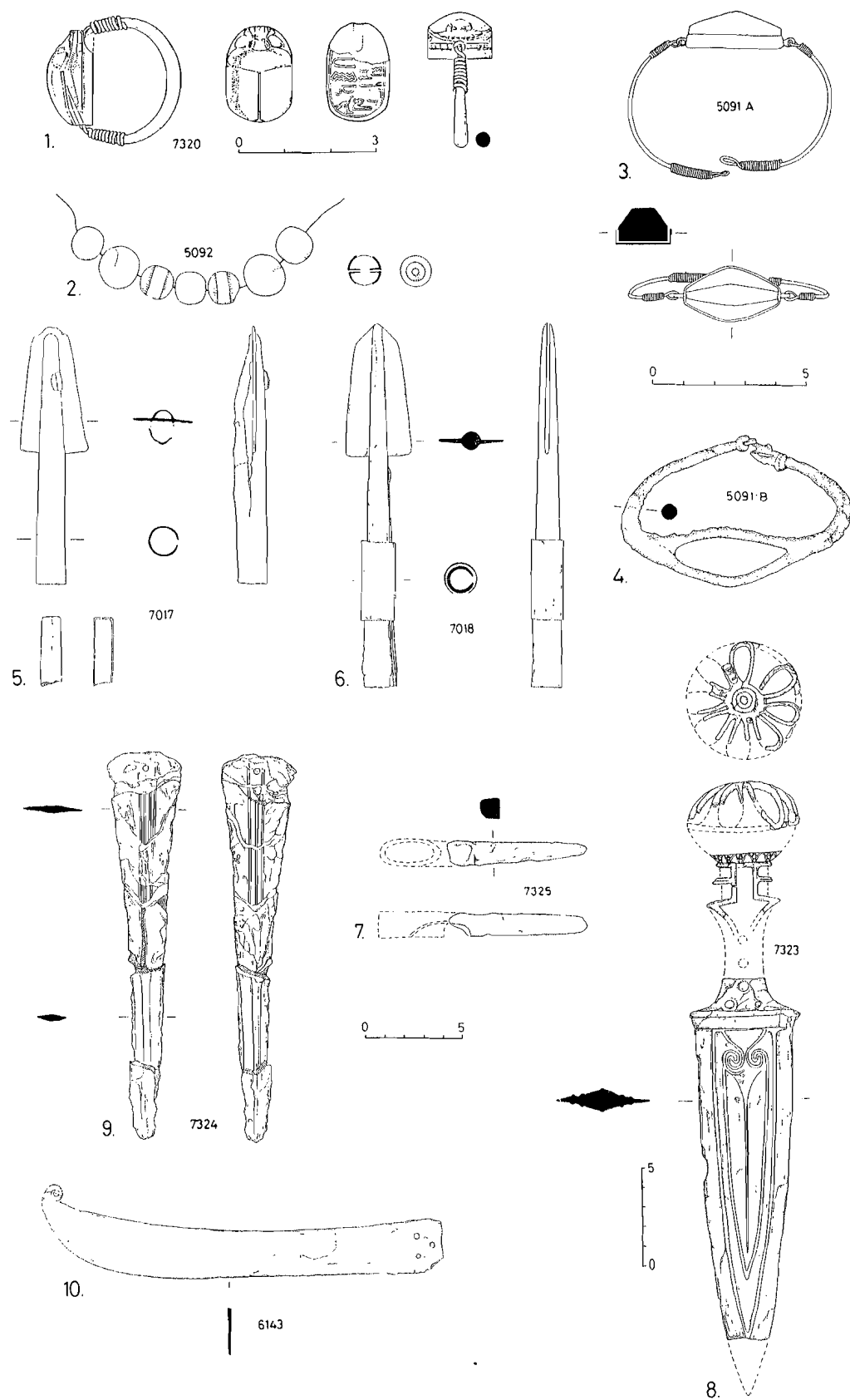


Fig. 22 Weapons and jewellery from tomb F/I-m/18-no. 3,  
stratum d/1 (early 13th Dynasty)

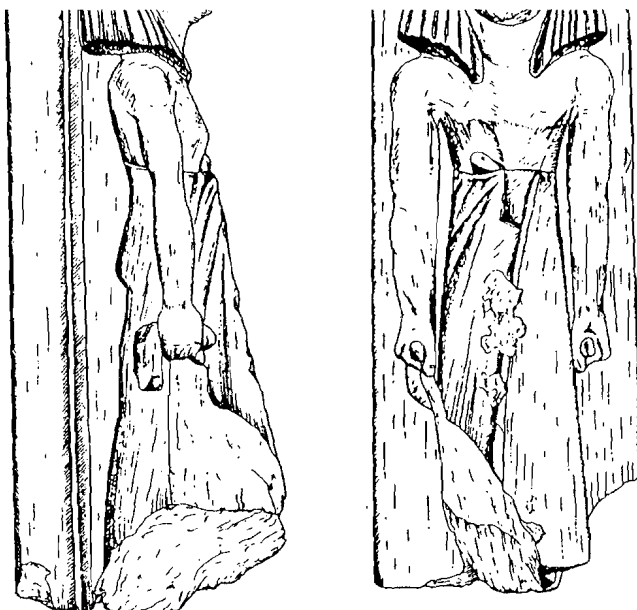


Fig. 23 Serpentine statuette of an official from palace tomb F/I-I/19-no. 1, stratum d/1 (reg. no. 5093).

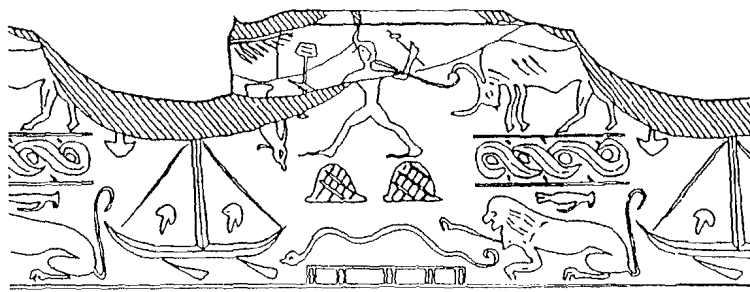


Fig. 25 Impression from cylinder seal depicting the north Syrian weather-god, found in the northern part of the palace of the early 13th Dynasty, stratum d/1 (reg. no. 2995).

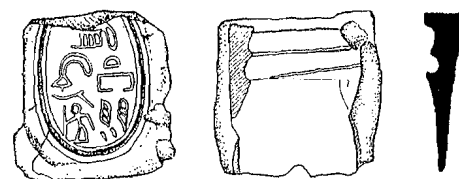


Fig. 24 Seal-impression of the treasurer of the King of Lower Egypt and chief steward named Aya from palace tomb F/I-m/18-no. 2, stratum d/1 (reg. no. 5696).

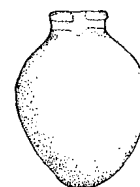
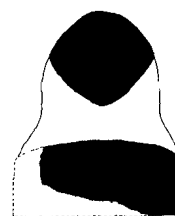
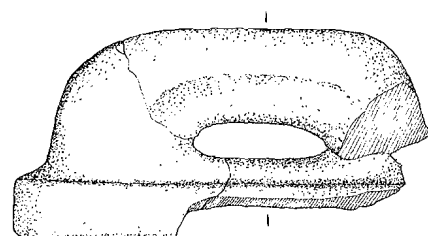


Fig. 26 Plumb-bob and stone float left in the courtyard of the palace by builders (reg. nos. 3117 and 3118).



by Egyptian art.<sup>45</sup> This seal is an important discovery, as it shows that Baal Zephon, the northern Syrian weather-god, was established in Egypt as early as the first half of the eighteenth century BC. Within the community of Canaanite settlers he was probably the most important local deity and understandably he was soon identified with his Egyptian counterpart, the god Sutekh or Seth, who was also a weather-god.<sup>46</sup> Thus we can explain why Seth, the ancient god of Ombos in Upper Egypt and of the desert, was established at Avaris in the Delta and secured a cultic place there which endured for over 400 years to the end of the Ramesside Period (see below).

A palace household is a particularly suitable source of material from which to study the level of foreign relations. We may expect to find there the remains of foreign goods which would have been too expensive for an ordinary household. For example, sherds of Cretan Kamares ware of superb workmanship (**Plate I, A**) have been found in the palace gardens.<sup>47</sup> This is the first time that an example of this ware has been found in a controlled stratigraphic context. It is important because it connects the Middle Minoan IIB-IIIA period with the early 13th Dynasty. A sherd of Post-Kamares style was also found but, unfortunately, out of context.<sup>48</sup> From a plundered tomb of the palace necropolis came a Minoan pendant of gold representing two beasts, probably dogs, facing one another (**Plate I, B, and cover**).<sup>49</sup> Dogs arranged in a similar composition, but in a different style, are portrayed on earrings from the Aegina Treasure, now in the British Museum. In this context, it should also be mentioned that the tangential spirals on the above-mentioned dagger (**Fig. 22, 8; Plate 11, A**) from another palace tomb also represent a typical Minoan motif. All these together indicate that the inhabitants of this palace had wide-ranging cultural and economic relations.

While the palace was being expanded and refurbished, activity suddenly stopped. In the courtyard (**Fig. 18, H**) pots of paint, a plumb bob and other instruments were simply dropped on the floor (**Fig. 26**). The doors of the palace were closed up by brickwork and the palace was abandoned. As it would have been highly unusual for an administrative palace to be abandoned suddenly, we suspect that one of the inhabitants - most probably an overseer of the foreign countries - fell into disgrace. Perhaps he had

was little more than three years. It was no real dynasty; it consisted of a series of usurpers.

One of these usurpers was the king Hetep-ib-Re<sup>c</sup> °Amu-sa-Hornedjherytet. In 1941 Labib Habachi found a statue of this king together with three statues of the queen Sobeknofru, the last ruler of the 12th Dynasty, in a small sanctuary near our palace.<sup>50</sup> This king had perhaps originally been the queen's chief steward, who after her reign was in a position to seize the Egyptian throne for a time. His name indicates that he was the son of an Asiatic. Most likely he was one of the functionaries of the Asiatic settlement at Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup>. This king had extensive connections with northern Syria. A sceptre in the shape of a ceremonial club with his name, found in a contemporary royal tomb called by the excavator the 'tomb of The Lord of the Goats' in Ebla, was most probably a diplomatic gift.<sup>51</sup> From the same period in Ebla a series of ivory box-inlays depicting Egyptian gods was recovered. This suggests that vigorous trading was going on, or at least that diplomatic gifts were being exchanged on the highest level with the kings of Ebla.<sup>52</sup>

That this interaction took place on levels other than just royal is shown by Syrian glyptic art, in which there was strong Egyptian influence from the late eighteenth century BC onward.<sup>53</sup> Representations of gods in Pharaonic robes and crowns, of ankh-signs, of goddesses with wings, of baboons and vultures - all these show clearly that northern Syria and Egypt had close ties during the earlier part of the 13th Dynasty. It is clear that these close ties were administered by the high officials of the Egyptian crown, who during the 13th Dynasty were often the power-brokers and king-makers, sometimes even the kings themselves. These officials were not, however, the true predecessors of the Hyksos because they did not form a dynasty. How we may reconstruct the formation of the Hyksos rule, I shall try to explain below.

## V. The expanding Canaanite settlement at Tell el-Dab<sup>c</sup>a during the 13th Dynasty

After the palace was abandoned, the area continued to be inhabited. However, it was some time before the palace itself was again reoccupied. The settlement of this period shows a more egalitarian pattern. At the same time the eastern part of the town (area A/II, see **Fig. 2, no. 8**, and **Fig. 27**) was more intensively settled.<sup>54</sup> The inhabitants were still Canaanites. The proportion of Middle Bronze Age ceramics in the occupation levels rises from about 20 per cent to 40 per cent. This could be taken as an indication of some new influx from Canaan. We do not know, however, if these occupants originated from the southern or northern part of the Levant.

In addition to trading, the main economic activity in this settlement seems to have been the production of copper implements. Numerous moulds have been found, most of which were for the production of wood-working tools (**Fig. 28**). New technologies in metallurgy now appeared, such as double moulds, which had only rarely been used in Egypt before. New kinds of animals were introduced from the Near East, among them the wool-sheep.<sup>55</sup> The horse was also probably an occasional import into Egypt at this time.<sup>56</sup> In contrast to the older part of the settlement, only Egyptian house-types are to be observed. Each house was detached, surrounded by an ample courtyard with an enclosing wall (**Fig. 27; Plate 13, A**).

The results of neutron activation analysis suggest that trade with the northern Levant was reduced. Whereas in the late 12th Dynasty the majority of amphorae and other foreign ceramics seems to have been imported together with their contents from the Levant, in the 13th Dynasty the majority of the containers came from southern Palestine, and this continued to be the case thereafter.<sup>57</sup> These analytical results seem to contradict the evidence of other elements at the site. Features such as the house types in stratum H (=d/2) and certain Middle Bronze IIA pottery types, such as brown-polished jugs with the Anatolian form of spout and jugs with ring-shaped bodies, appear to be northern in origin (**Fig. 29; Plate 24, A-D**). The overwhelming majority of pottery, however, was imported from southern Palestine. This does not mean that the carriers of Middle Bronze



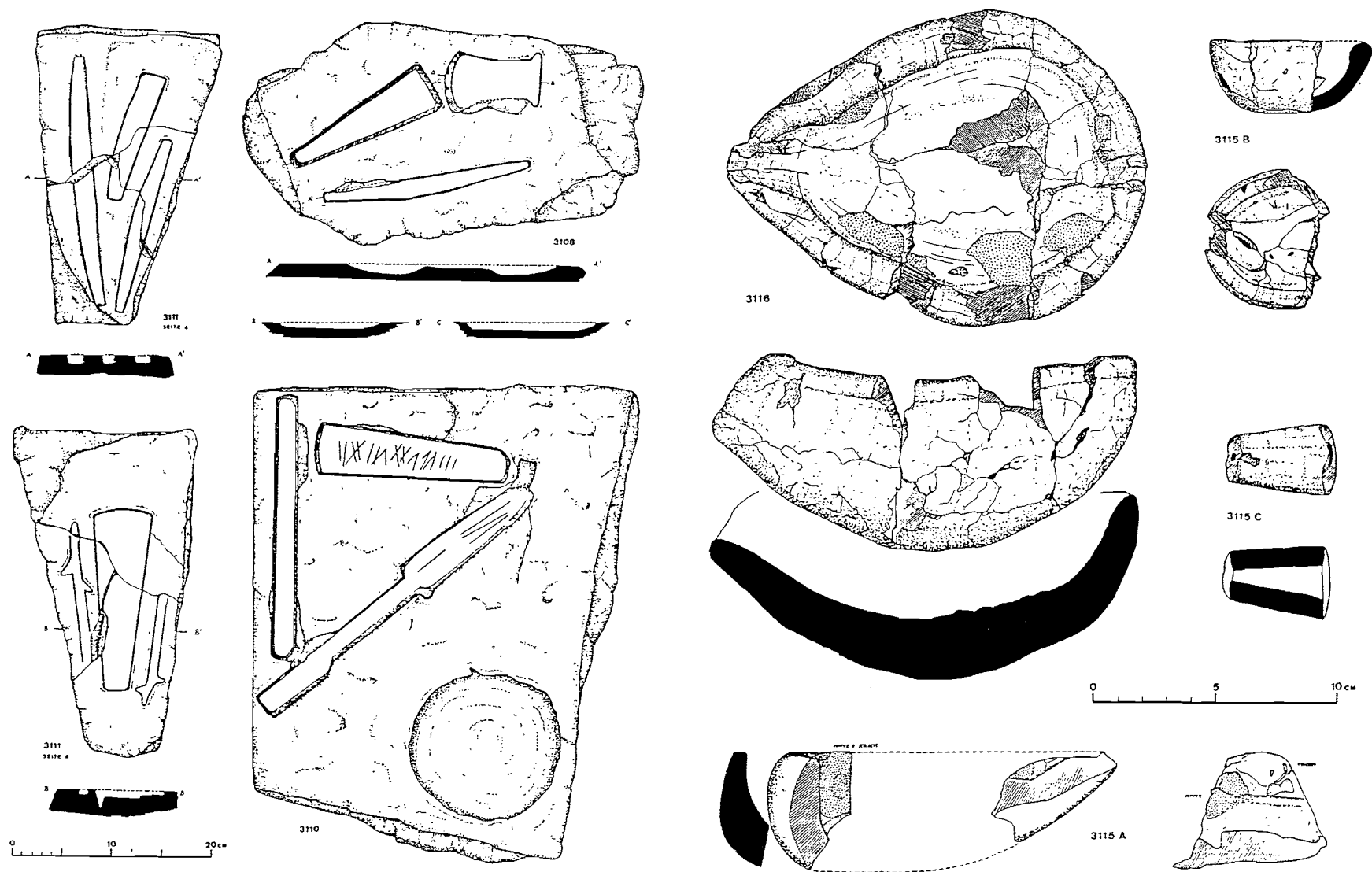


Fig. 28 Pottery crucibles and moulds of limestone for the manufacture of metal tools, from stratum c = G.

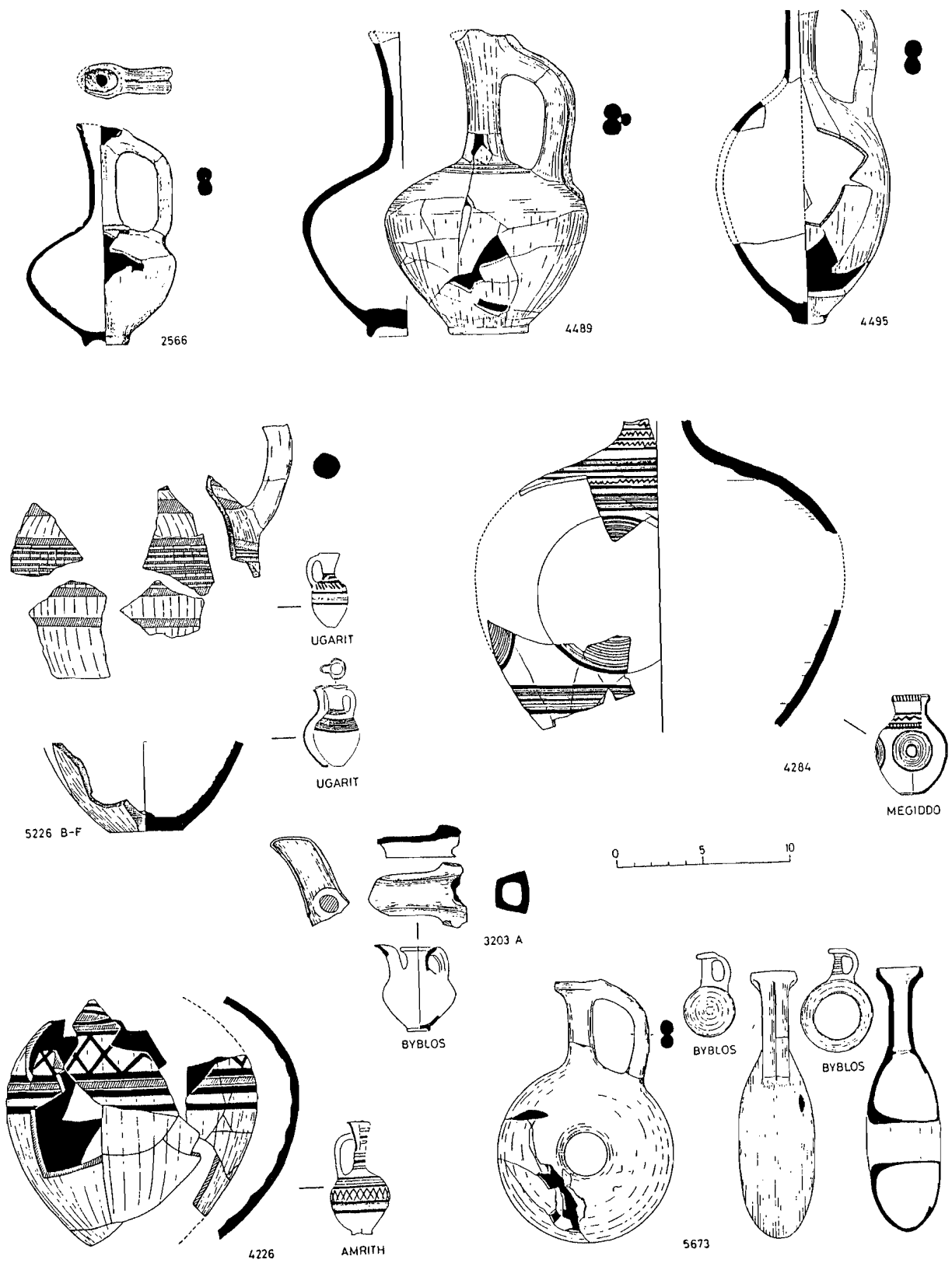


Fig. 29 Northern pottery types at Tell el-Dab'a.

Age culture at Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup> were originally from southern Palestine. An attempt to give an explanation for this contradictory evidence is offered below.

Later, during the Middle Bronze Age IIB phase (during or after the time of strata F and E/3, see **Fig. 3**), there is evidence that Byblos and other important coastal city states in the northern Levant fell into decline. This would explain the reduction in trade between that area and Egypt and the increase in trade between Egypt and southern Palestine and Cyprus. From stratum G (second half of the eighteenth century BC) onward, there is growing evidence of trade with Cyprus.<sup>58</sup> There is also some evidence of a Cypriot community living in the area of Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup>, as black polished white incised globular juglets, which are somehow related to the famous Tell el-Yahudiya ware, were locally produced by hand using a technique typical for Cyprus,<sup>59</sup> in which the handle was pushed through the wall of the vessel in order to attach it firmly (see **Fig. 49**). The pattern of decoration is also typical of Cypriot black slip ware.

Over the course of this period, the settlement expanded considerably but suffered a crisis near its end. Tombs found in excavation areas F/I and A/II, areas which are more than 500 m apart from each other, were obviously emergency graves. Some of them are merely pits into which bodies were thrown. Most were without offerings. We think the evidence suggests that an epidemic swept through the town. It may have been the bubonic plague, perhaps the disease referred to as 'Asiatic disease' in the medical papyri of the early 18th Dynasty.<sup>60</sup> It is possible that the plague acquired this name as it raged within this Asiatic community in the Delta. However, this is speculation as there is, as yet, no scientific evidence for such a plague.

Physical anthropological research by Winkler, Wilfing and Grosschmidt<sup>61</sup> has shown that the general physical condition of the population of Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup> was poor. Anaemic diseases, most probably caused by parasites, affected at least one third of the population. So-called Harris lines in the long bones and enamel hypoplasia of the teeth, which indicate serious health problems resulting in the temporary arrest of growth, have frequently been found in human material from most of the strata. Poor health would have rendered many inhabitants of this settlement without resistance to the epidemics which can



mortality rate had an average lifespan of 29.7 years (females) or 34.4 years (males).

The male population of the late Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period at Tell el-Dab'a was not of Egyptian origin, according to Winkler. The closest physical affinities are to be found within the population of the Levant, a very close similarity being noted to the inhabitants of the Iron Age cemetery at Kamid el Loz.<sup>62</sup> It is interesting that the female population type is very different and seems to have been of local origin. The social pattern of male immigrants acquiring local wives is typical for mercenaries or sailors in employment abroad. The major problem for further research remains the scarcity of well preserved and well documented osteological material.

## **VI. The sacred mortuary precinct and cemeteries in the eastern part of the town**

While the centre of the settlement at F/I continued to be inhabited, in the eastern part of the settlement, in area A/II (**Fig. 27**), occupation came to a temporary halt after stratum G (before c.1700 BC). Settlement areas were converted into cemeteries, which soon spread to surround a large, newly constructed temple (III) of Middle Bronze Age type (stratum F). This major temple (**Figs 30-1; Plate 13, B**) is one of the largest sanctuaries known from the Middle Bronze Age world, being about 30 m long. It was painted blue; thus it was probably dedicated to a cosmic god. In front of it was found a rectangular altar from which a bunch of acorns was retrieved (**Fig. 31; Plate 14, A-C**). This may be an indication of a tree cult (Asherah, cf Judges G:25, 28, 30). To the southeast of the altar one or two pits may be identified as purpose-dug tree-pits. The arrangement suggests that the trees provided shade for the altar. Perhaps the acorns fell from one of these trees. In the forecourt surrounding the altar offering-pits were also excavated, which contained numerous and varied fragments of pottery and calcinated cattle bones. No pig bones were found, possibly indicating that the Canaanite settlers already had some sort of taboo concerning the consumption of pig meat, at least as a temple offering.



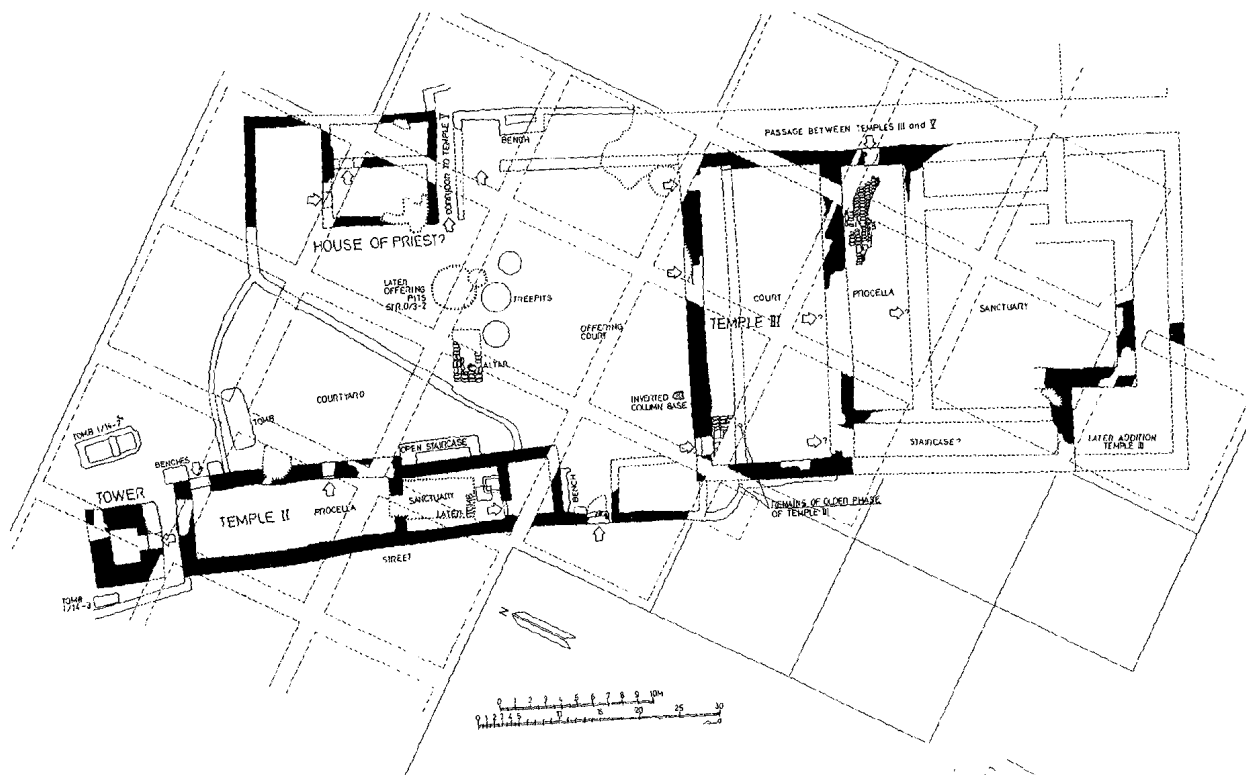
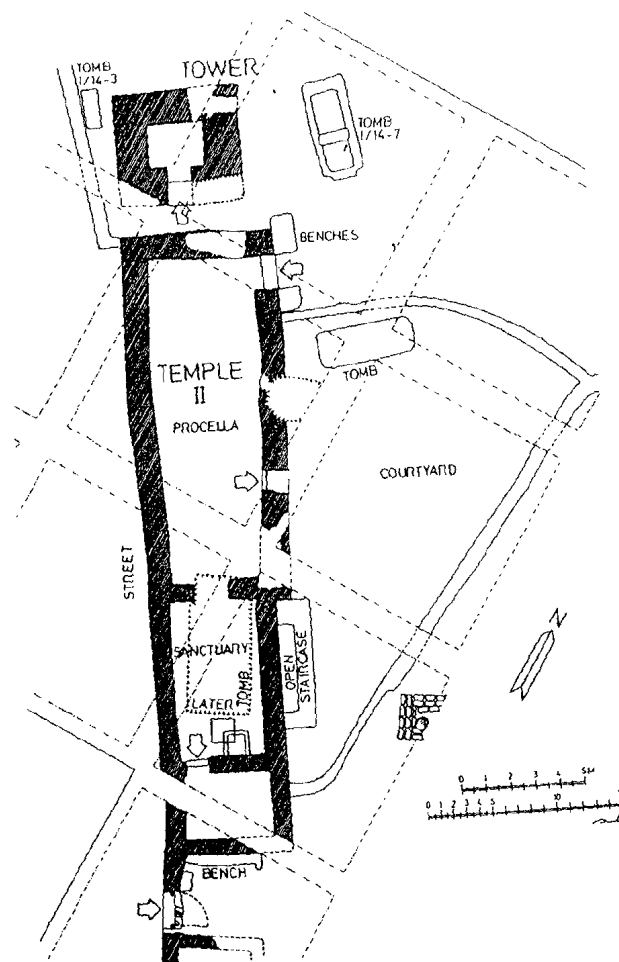


Fig. 31 The arrangement of tree- and offering-pits around the altar in front of Temple III (strata F - E/3; the offering-pits date to the later stratum D/2-3).

Fig. 32 The Canaanite 'Breithaus'-type Temple II at Tell el-Dab'a, area A/II, stratum E/3 (first half sixteenth century).



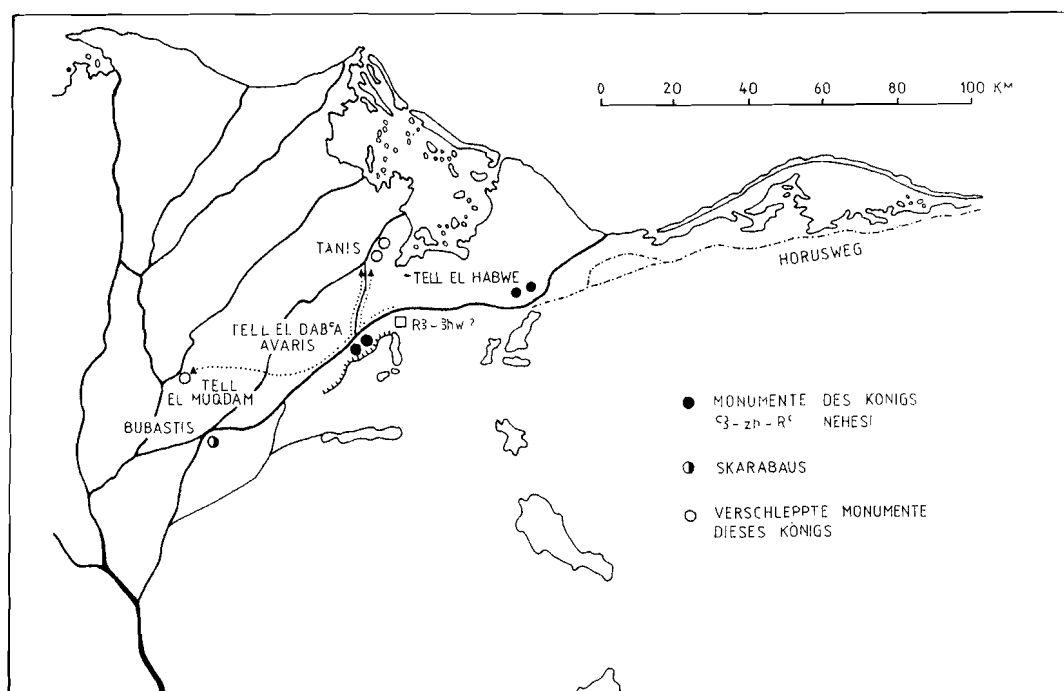
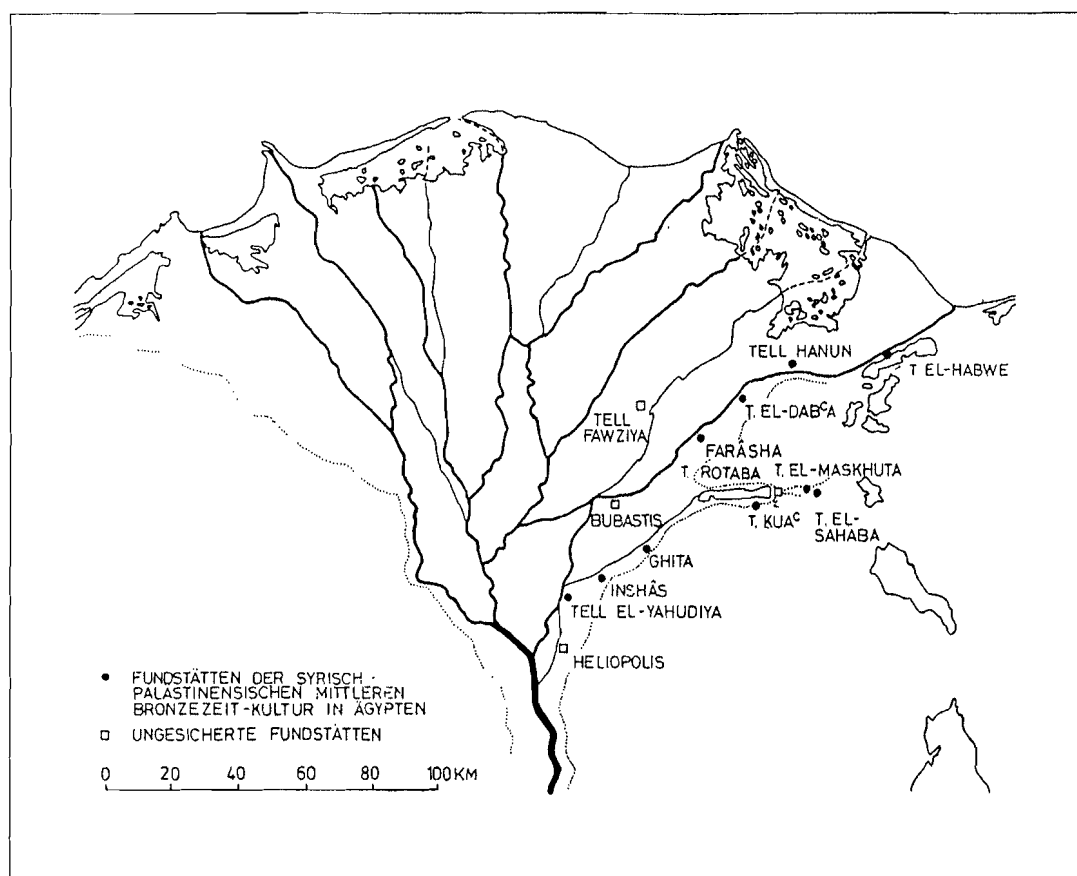


Fig. 33 The distribution of the monuments of King Nehesy.



within the Mari correspondence the expression 'to butcher a donkey' was synonymous for making a treaty.<sup>63</sup> Thus, it is probable that treaty negotiations were concluded with the sacrifice of donkeys, which were interred within round pits in front of the temple. A similar pit containing sacrificed donkeys has been found recently by Oren at Tel Haror within Nahal Gerar in southern Palestine.

Within and near the precinct of the main temple, III, two door jambs of limestone were found, unfortunately in disturbed contexts. Both are inscribed with the names of King 'Aa-zeh-Re' Nehesy,<sup>64</sup> who was most probably a ruler of the early 14th Dynasty. It seems that his father, probably a high-ranking Egyptian official, had founded a small independent kingdom in the north-eastern Delta. Although the father's name is unknown to us, he does not seem to have been of Asiatic origin. His son, Nehesy, who reigned only for a short time, left a scatter of monuments in the eastern Delta - at Bubastis, Tell el-Dab'a and Tell el-Habwa-East (**Fig. 33**). This distribution roughly corresponds to the extent of the Middle Bronze Age sites in the eastern Nile Delta (**Fig. 34**). Monuments of Nehesy at Tell el-Muqdam and Tanis were no doubt moved there later from Avaris. As Temple III is the only monumental building which dates approximately to this period, it seems likely that the jambs came from this temple, although we cannot be absolutely sure.

On the western flank of this sacred complex there was a second temple (II), a 'Breithaustempel' of old Near Eastern tradition (**Figs 30 and 32; Plate 16, A-B**). It had a double entrance from a courtyard and its sanctuary was to the left of the axis. This temple also had a tower. On the other side of Temple III stood a third temple (V) (**Fig. 30; Plate 17, A-B**), which also had an altar in front of it. This temple, however, has an Egyptian layout and should be considered a mortuary temple (see below).

We know that the settlement was now called Avaris (*Hwt-w'rt*), 'the (royal) foundation of the district'.<sup>65</sup> During the reign of King Nehesy (c. 1710 BC) it became the capital of a small kingdom which should be considered as a part of the 14th Dynasty. The dynasty obviously relied heavily on the Asiatic settlers in the region. Tell el-Dab'a was,

however, not the only Middle Bronze Age site in the eastern Delta. During the 13th Dynasty, we know that at least Tell el-Farasha and Tell el-Maskhuta had also been occasionally settled by Canaanites (**Fig. 34**). After the foundation of this kingdom and the choice of Avaris as its capital, the dynasty of Nehesy now had to choose a city god and patron deity. The only known resident god during this time was the northern Syrian weather-god as shown on the Syrian-type cylinder seal described above (**Fig. 25; Plate 12, C-D**). This foreign god was now Egyptianised and identified with the Egyptian weather-god Seth. The epithet of Nehesy, 'beloved of Seth, Lord of Avaris', makes much more sense when it is realised that the original god behind this name was not Seth, but the Syrian weather-god. Seth was to retain his Asiatic appearance in this region into the Ramesside period (**Fig. 62**).

As this was a provincial kingdom, the offices were also much more provincial in scope. In one of the cemeteries surrounding Temple III, we found the tomb of a deputy treasurer (*idnw n imy-r sd3wt*)<sup>66</sup> named °Amu (= 'the Asiatic')<sup>67</sup> (**Fig. 35**, the name and title written on a scarab **Fig. 35, 1**). This burial was indeed Asiatic. The body was interred in a contracted position and equipped with a Syro-Palestinian chisel-shaped battle-axe of late MBIIA type and a triangular dagger with a mid-rib (**Fig. 35, 2-3**). Besides pottery of Egyptian type, we also found early types of Tell el-Yahudiya ware (**Fig. 35, 4**) deposited as offerings. In front of the tomb not just two but at least five and probably six donkeys had been buried. It is inconceivable that under normal conditions a deputy treasurer would have resided in a provincial town like Avaris. It was only after the secession of the dynasty of Nehesy from the kingdom of the 13th Dynasty that such a situation could have been expected to arise. This high office was, of course, now reduced to very local dimensions. The outfit of this tomb was, however, by local standards, very remarkable indeed. It is thus far the tomb containing the greatest number of sacrificed donkeys. As stated above, in our view, owners of tombs with donkey sacrifices were involved in the business of expeditions. The sacrifice of donkeys would make sense in this case as the deputy treasurer would have been responsible for obtaining the crown's share of the commodities attained by trading expeditions.

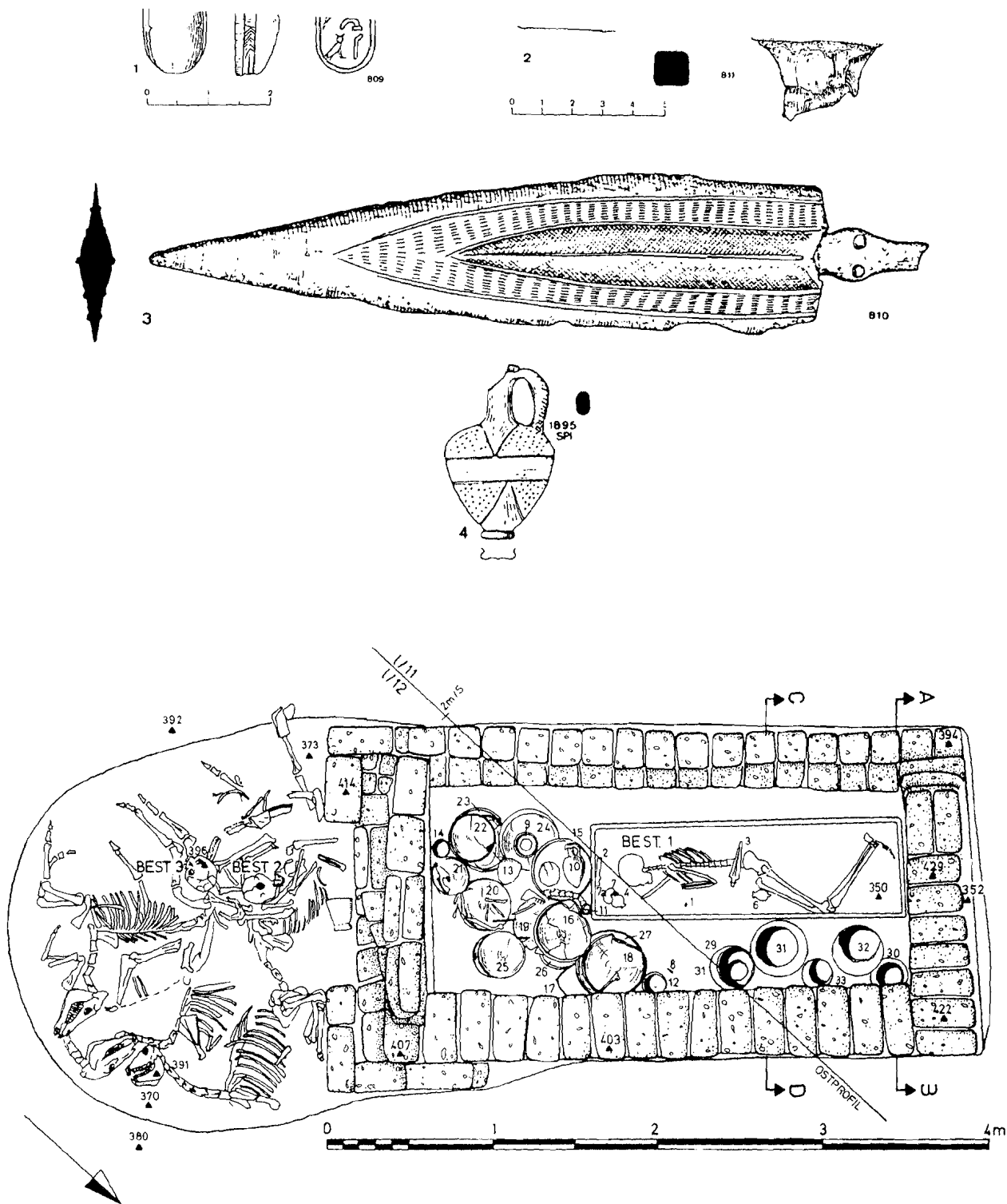


Fig. 35 Tomb A/II-I-no.5 of the deputy treasurer named 'Amu, 'the Asiatic'.

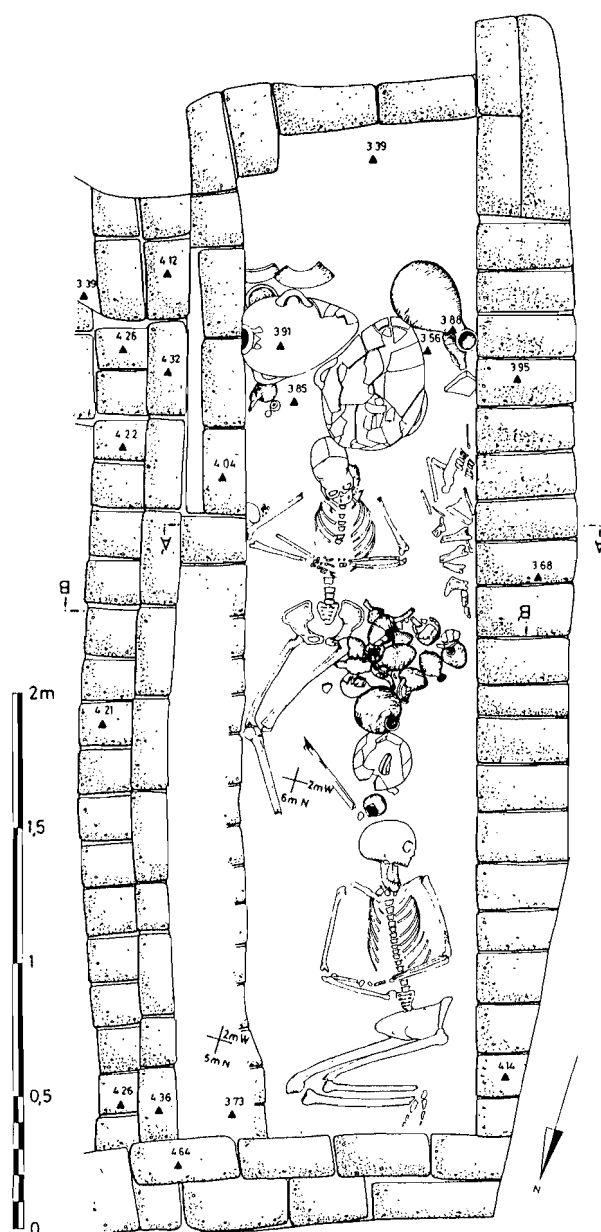


Fig. 36 Tomb A/II-m/16-no. 3, stratum F, the bodies in contracted position.

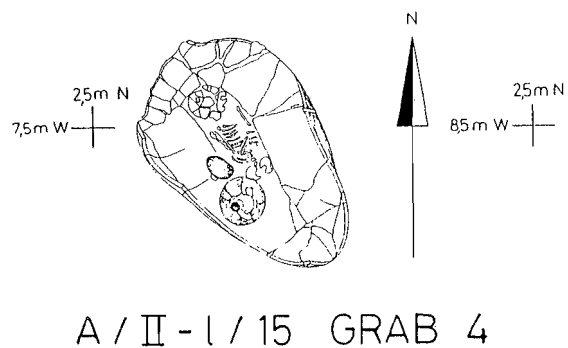
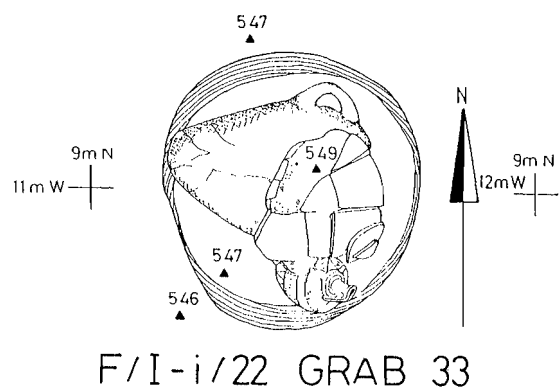
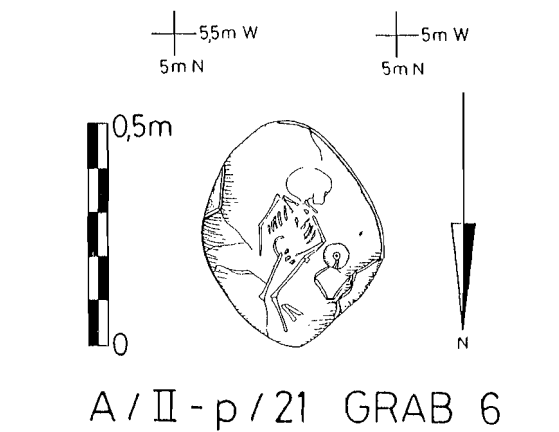
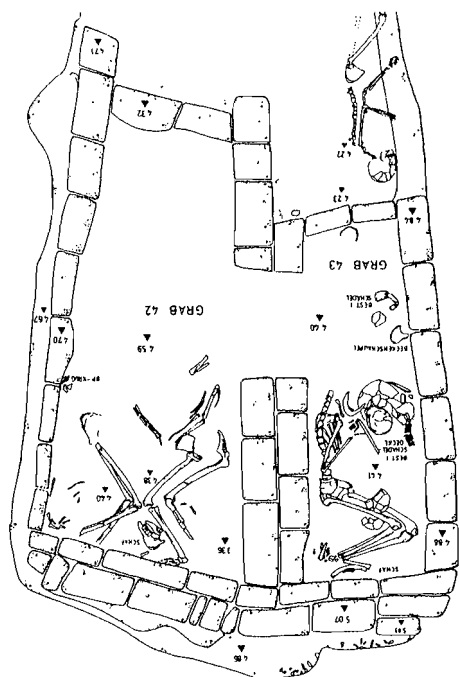
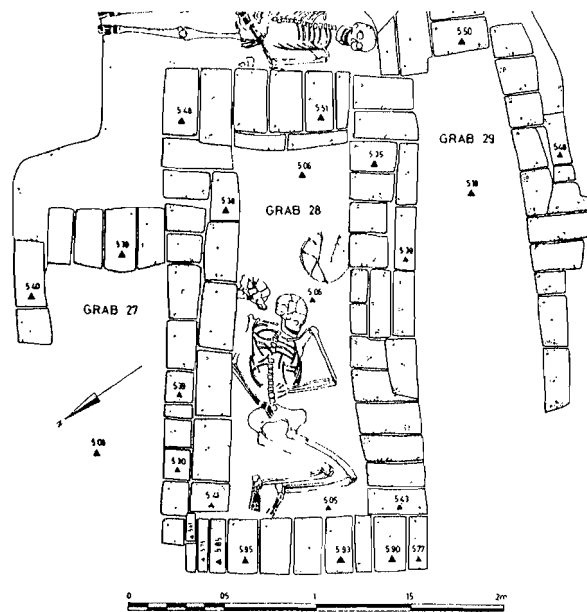


Fig. 37 Infant burials in amphorae.

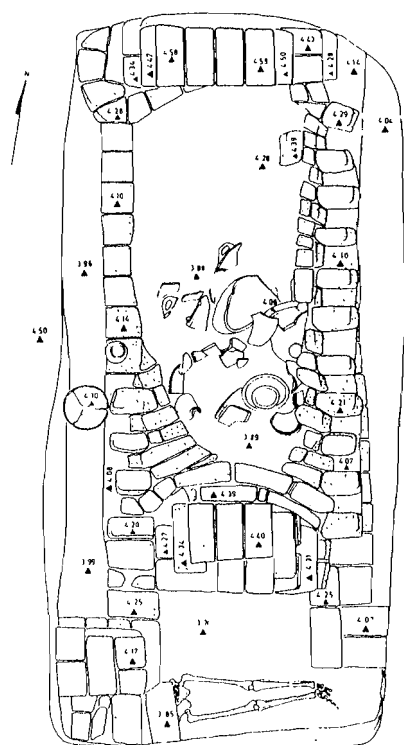




Tomb F/I - i/22 - No. 43



Tomb F/I - i/22 - No. 28



Tomb A/II - m/16 - No. 2

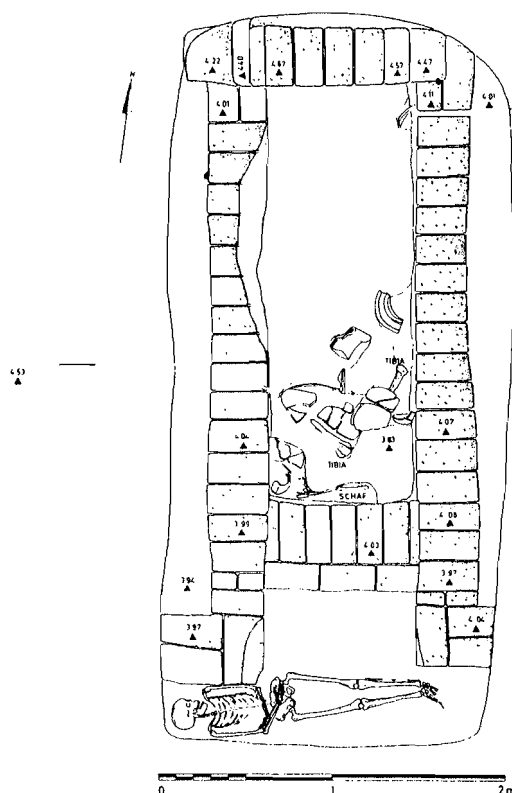


Fig. 38 Tombs with servant burials from stratum F.

During this period, many of the tombs belonged to warriors, who were normally equipped with a dagger and a battle-axe. Some also had an embossed copper belt very similar to the one found at Jericho, tomb J3.<sup>68</sup> Most of the tomb equipment consisted of types dating to the MBIIA and transitional MBIIA to MBIIIB periods (**Plate 18, A-D**).

The construction of the tombs is interesting. They usually consisted of a vaulted mud-brick chamber built in a pit (**Plate 19, A-B**). The construction of the vault is, however, not generally in Egyptian style, as was the case in strata H and G4, but uses a technique known in Mesopotamia.<sup>69</sup> This feature suggests that the majority of the settlers at Tell el-Dab'a were not of nomadic background but had architectural traditions of their own which they had brought with them.

Children were not buried in chambers but within imported amphorae (**Fig. 37; Plate 19, C**), although local Egyptian containers would have been more resistant to the pressure of the surrounding earth. This practice suggests that, with regard to funerary customs, the settlers were much more conservative than in their everyday life, in which they much more readily adopted Egyptian features. The dead were buried in a contracted position (**Figs 35-6; Plate 19, B**). Tombs contained between one and five burials, some of which were very rich (**Plate II, A-B**). Servants were interred in front of the tomb chambers of some tombs in stratum F (**Fig. 38; Plate 20, A-B**).<sup>70</sup> These servants were usually girls with strong bones. It appears that they were buried at the same time as their masters. It is interesting that the practice of servant burials appears at the same time more than 2000 km to the south in the kingdom of Kush.<sup>71</sup> While the Asiatics in the Delta quickly abandoned this grim burial custom, it continued in the Sudan. It is unclear whether there is any connection between Kush and Avaris in this respect. Most likely this particular Delta custom is to be considered an ancient Near Eastern feature which survived to a limited extent in some areas into the Middle Bronze Age.

Beginning in the period represented by stratum E/3, individual mortuary temples were built in the cemeteries surrounding the sacred precinct (**Figs 30 and 39**). Whereas Temples III and II display purely Near Eastern Bronze Age types of construction, the mortuary temples are of Egyptian type. We have in Tell el-Dab'a two such mortuary

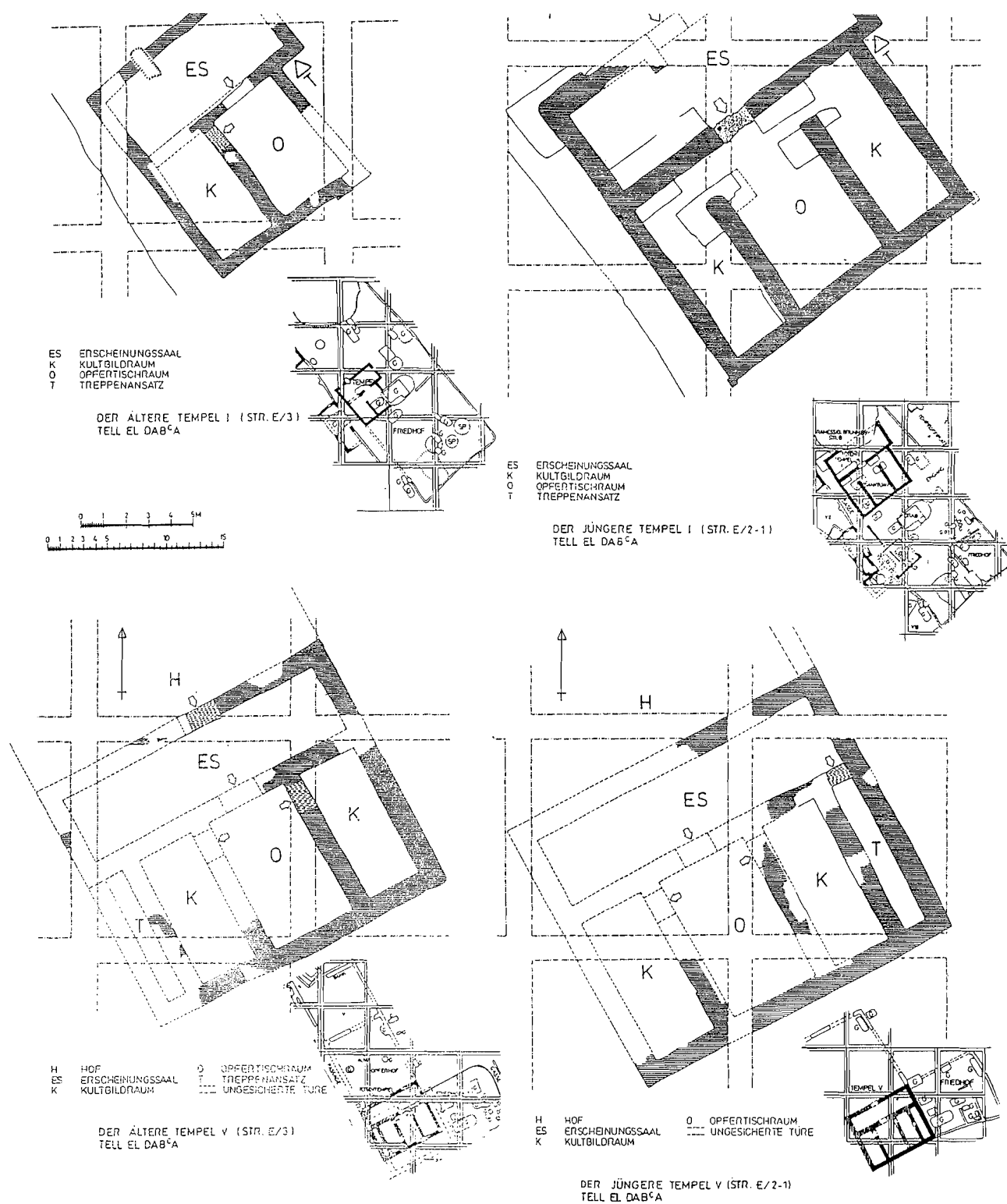


Fig. 39 Mortuary temples of area A/II, strata E/3-E-1.

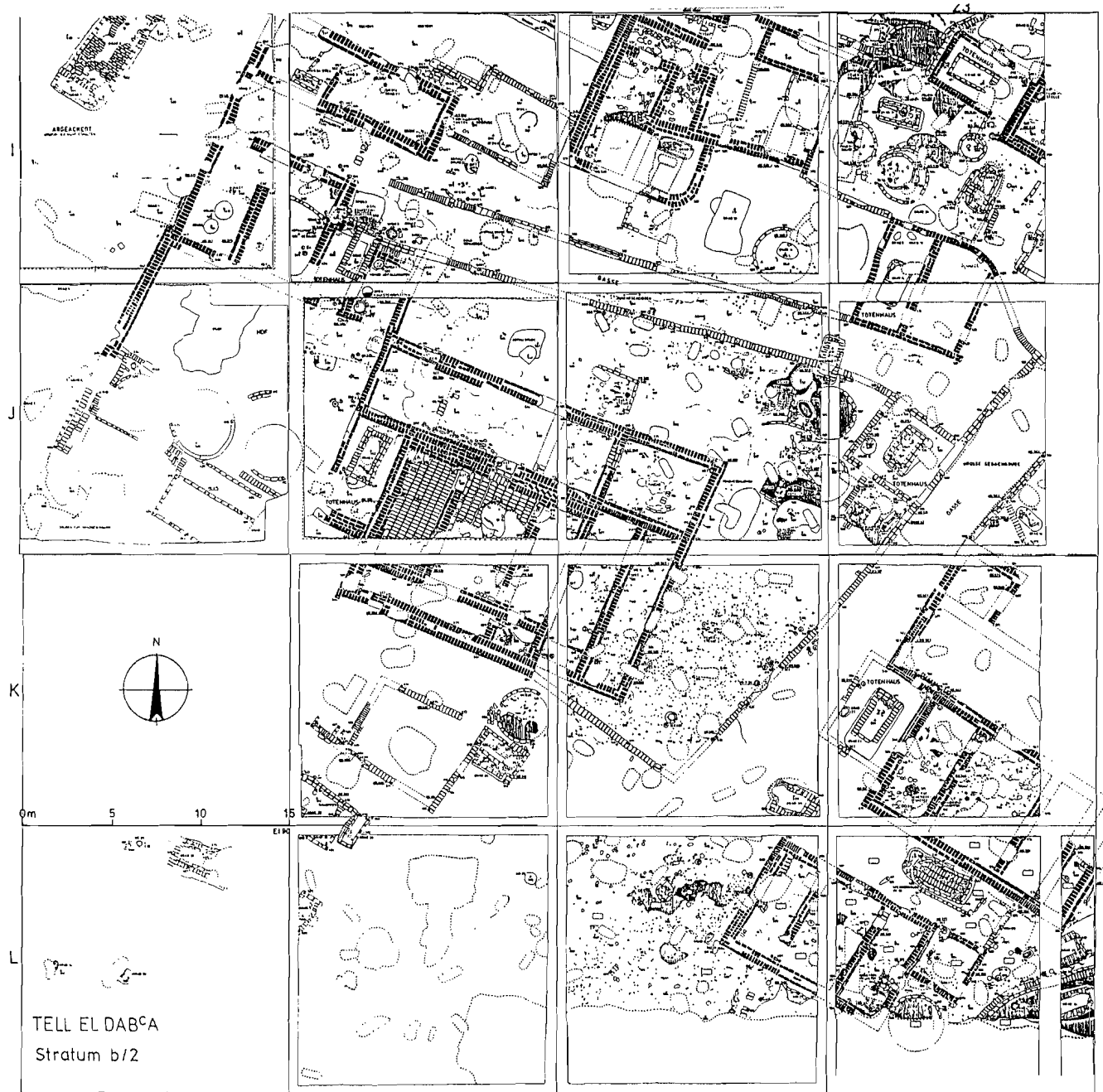


Fig. 40 Houses in area F/I.

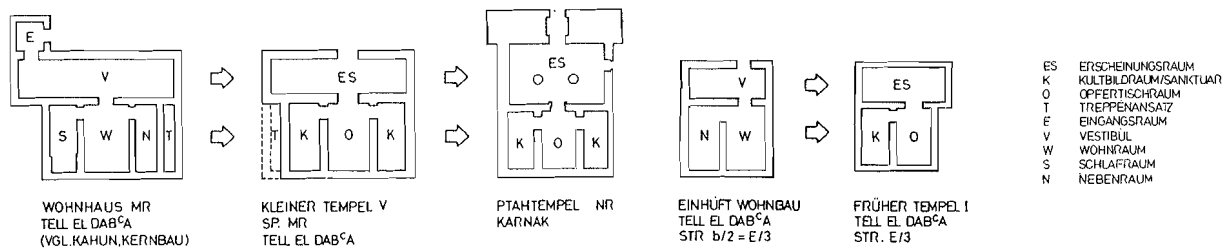


Fig. 41 The development of the temple from the plan and concept of the Middle Kingdom house.

of them imitate the room programme of the 12th Dynasty temple at nearby ʿEzbet Rusdi (Figs 4 and 39). Architectural analysis<sup>72</sup> has shown that this kind of temple developed from the customary middle-class house of this period, which is also represented at Tell el-Dabʿa (Figs 40-1). Where the house has a vestibule, the temple has an antechamber ('room of appearances'). Where the houses have a living room flanked by a bedroom and probably a second bedroom on the other side, the temples have an offering-table room at their centre, flanked by two sanctuaries. Close comparison shows not only that the disposition of the chambers in the secular and ritual buildings was very similar but also that the dimensions of the rooms in the houses and the temples were nearly identical. The same applies to the function of the rooms. Specifically, the rooms in the sanctuaries, in which the images of the gods slept, correspond to the bedrooms of secular houses. Although it is highly doubtful that the small temples at Tell el-Dabʿa ever contained statues of the deceased or of gods, they accurately reflect in smaller proportions the plan of the larger temples (*ka*-temples) of this period, such as the one at ʿEzbet Rusdi (Fig. 4). The arrangement of the rooms in the small temples at Tell el Dabʿa can also be found later during the New Kingdom as a popular scheme of temples, including Theban mortuary temples.

Thus the excavations at Tell el-Dabʿa have contributed to the very important question of the development of temples in Ancient Egypt. At the same time they have shown that the inhabitants, though of Canaanite origin, quickly acquired Egyptian religious traditions. They went through a process of Egyptianisation, which is already evident, not only in their material culture but also in their funerary practices, some decades before the beginning of the Hyksos Period.

## **VII. The urban development of Avaris shortly before and during the Hyksos period**

The settlement of strata G and F-E/2 has been carefully studied, especially in the more central area F/I. It is surprising that the proportion of Syro-Palestinian pottery rises from 20 per cent to 40 per cent at the expense of Egyptian ceramic material in the settlement debris from stratum G (c) onward. It is not yet clear whether this was due to a further influx of Canaanites or to an increase in imports. On the other hand, foreign house types were no longer used. The house plans, as noted above, were of purely Egyptian type.

In strata F, E/3 and E/2, the originally egalitarian settlement pattern becomes socially differentiated (**Fig. 42-3**). In the programme of houses different types begin to occur. For the wealthier people, the more sophisticated floor plan discussed above, with a vestibule, a living room placed between a bedroom and a side room and sometimes with storage rooms became popular. The dependants of these upper-class inhabitants clustered around the houses of their overlords in much humbler buildings. In time, the better houses became more solid and larger, especially with regard to the capacity of their magazines (**Fig. 43**). In terms of the quality of the houses, there is a difference between the central part of the town (**Fig. 2, nos 13-14**) and the peripheral areas. In the course of the Hyksos period, from about 1600 BC onward, the peripheral areas (A/II, A/V) were used more intensively for settlement. But while a living compound originally consisted of a house and an ample courtyard with silos, the compound was gradually filled completely with structures (**Plate 21, A-B**).

There was no longer any space for open cemeteries within the settlement. Cemeteries around the temple in area A/II (**Fig. 2, no. 8**, see also **Fig. 30**) were covered by houses in the later Hyksos period and the mortuary temples were dismantled. Tombs were accommodated within the courtyards of houses or within the houses themselves. This custom can be observed at Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup> already in area F/I from stratum F (= b/3) onward, where tombs are found sunk within the houses (**Fig. 44**). Especially prominent was the custom of constructing a chamber outside the house against the wall of the bedroom (**Figs 42 and 45**). Within these attached constructions family tombs were

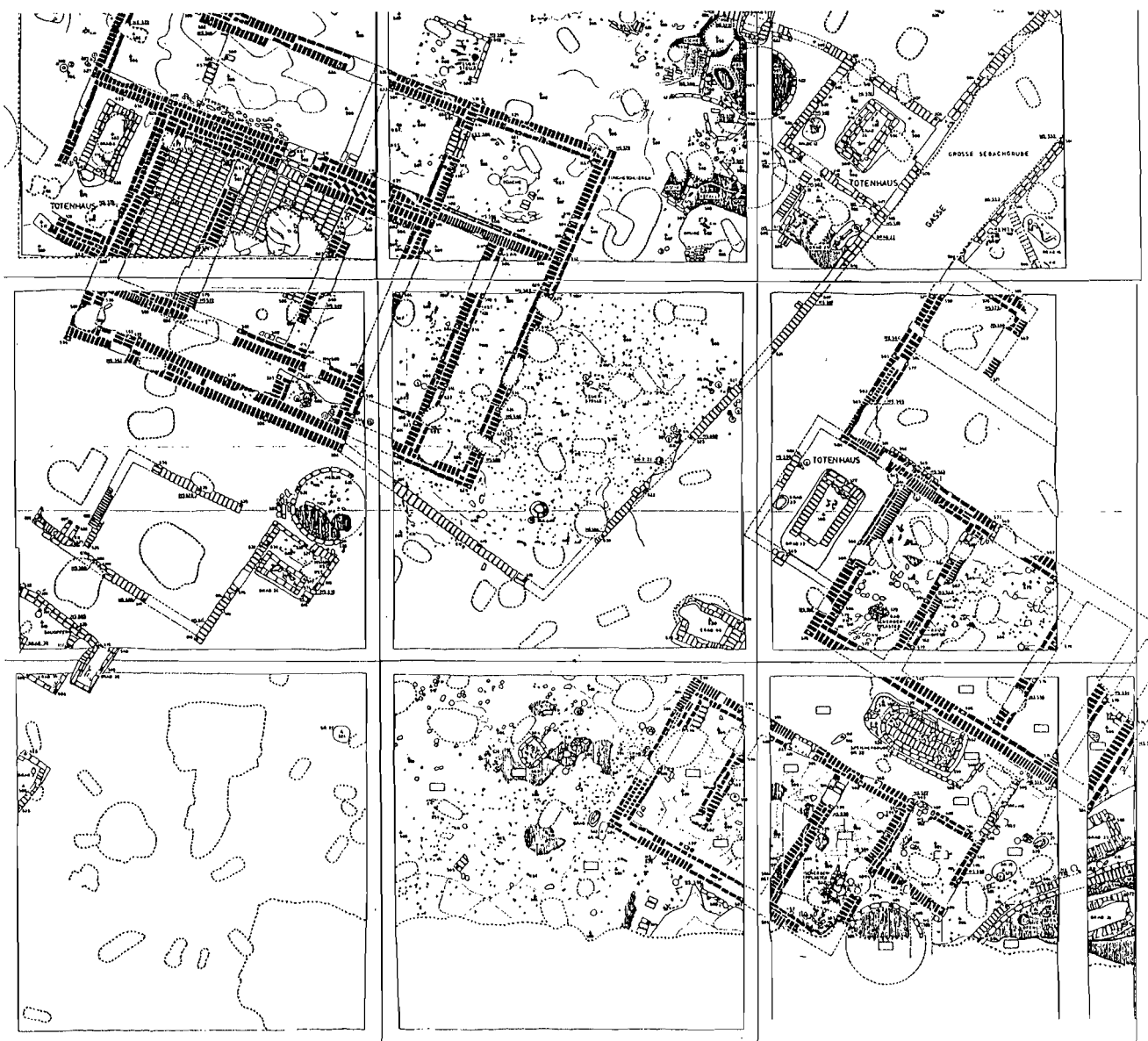


Fig. 42 Plan of area F/I, stratum b/2 (= E/3).



Fig. 43 Plan of area F/I, stratum b/1 (= E/2-1).



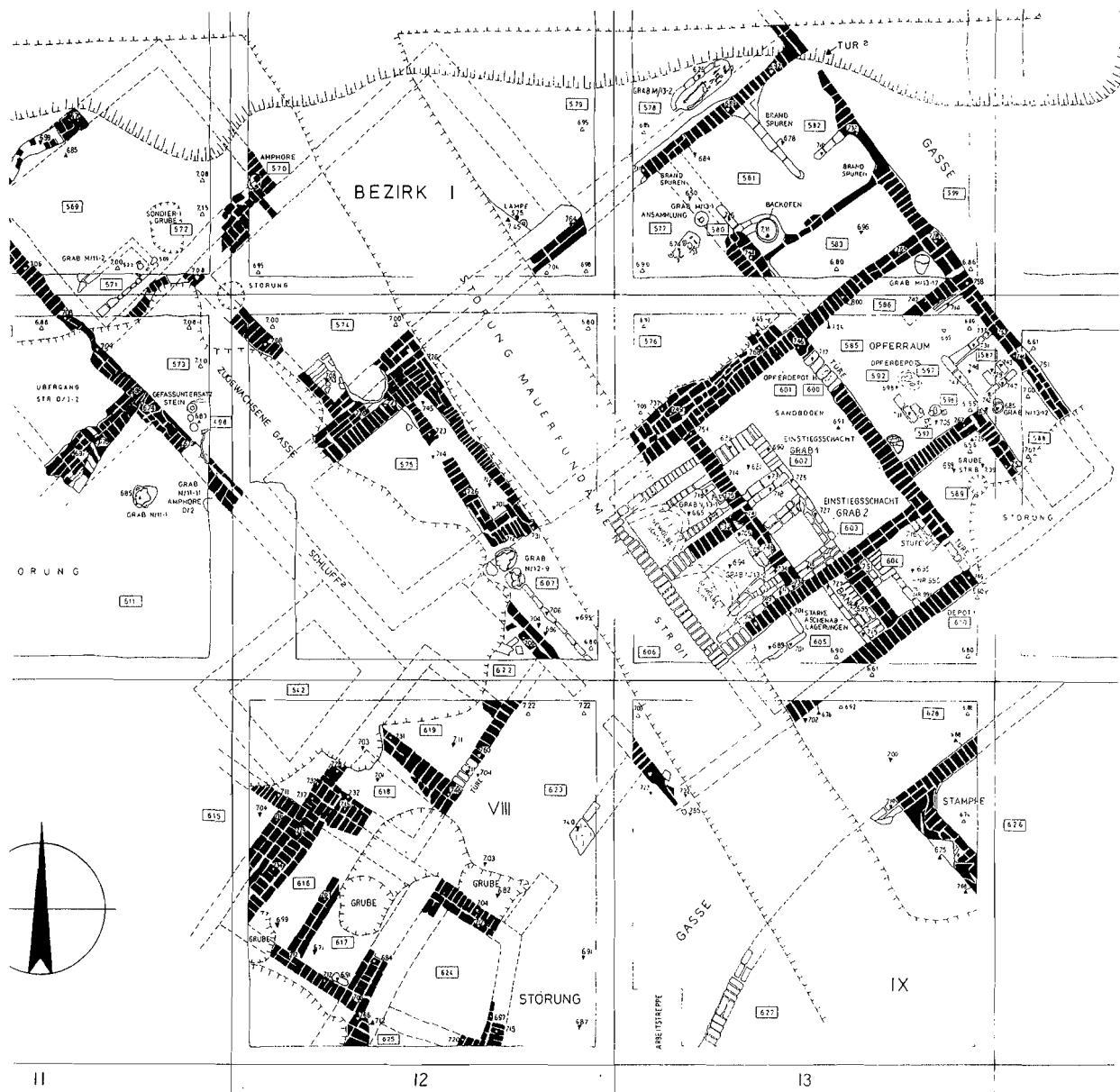


Fig. 44 Tombs inside a house



Age, house burials can be found at important Middle Bronze sites, especially at Megiddo. The house burial is an old urban tradition in the Near East.<sup>73</sup> This feature is a further indication of the Near Eastern urban background of the majority of the population at Tell el-Dab'a.

To recapitulate: during the advanced Hyksos period, when space within the settlement became scarce, the ancient tradition of the house burial, which was already present before the Hyksos period, again became important. The custom adopted from the Egyptians, seen in strata F-E/1, of family cemeteries and mortuary chapels had to be abandoned owing to lack of space. Burial chambers were dug out of the ground floor of the houses. Some buildings had large chambers constructed at the same time as the house walls in order to accommodate the burials of family members. We do not know whether such houses were abandoned when the burial chambers were put to use. We have some evidence that at least some of the rooms were blocked up and only occasionally opened in order to deposit votive offering-vessels into pits.

The miniature offering-vessels illustrate an interesting shift in the concept of providing the dead with the victuals they would need for their after-life. The initial tomb-offerings of food and drink would supply a man for a time but not eternally. The additional supply of miniature pottery guaranteed food forever by magical means. The form of the vessel substituted for the original contents, the form alone embodying all substance needed. This custom is a further development of the concept of eternity initially developed by the ancient Egyptians shortly before the dynastic age. It may be considered an important step in the history of mankind. The concept of eternity and the magic application of votive vessels to furnish the deceased with food eternally was, however, not firmly rooted in the Middle Bronze Age world. It was adopted from the Egyptians.

## VIII. Ceramics, trade and historical conclusions

The enormous quantity of settlement debris collected in the different strata accumulated over a period of approximately 280-300 years is an important historical source that may be evaluated in many different ways. It is, however, imperative to distinguish between the different ceramic types and wares in order to be able to analyse them statistically. While closed contexts, such as tombs or offering deposits, provide us with complete shapes, the settlement debris can give us an idea of the quantity used in the ancient households. It is interesting, for example, to calculate the percentages of Egyptian as opposed to Middle Bronze Age types, some of which were imported and some produced locally at Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup>. The sudden increase of Middle Bronze Age types from stratum G/4 to stratum G/1-3 is surely very significant, suggesting an influx of new elements from the Levant into Egypt. This influx took place after 1750 BC, that is, during the advanced 13th Dynasty. It would appear that the Egyptian crown was either in need of more people from the Levant to serve as soldiers, seamen, shipbuilders and craftsmen or was unable to control the influx of population from the Levant - in either case with undoubted effect on the political situation in north-eastern Egypt. Ceramics may also help to illuminate the origins of the Asiatic population of Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup>. Very important is the typology of Tell el-Yahudiya ware.<sup>74</sup> The stratigraphy of Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup> makes it possible to study the different types of this ware and their development (**Fig. 46; Plates 22-3**).

Tell el-Yahudiya ware seems to have originated in northern Palestine and the area around Byblos, where the oldest specimens of this pottery have been found (**Fig. 47**). This ware was imported into Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup> from the early 13th Dynasty (stratum d/1) onwards and soon spread further south until it reached the Kingdom of Kush in present-day northern Sudan. It is clear that Tell el-Yahudiya ware spread from north to south and that the oldest types of the ware were imported from the Levant.<sup>75</sup>

The distribution of certain types, such as the piriform 1b jugs, shows the close connection between Egypt, northern Palestine and the northern Levant (**Fig. 48, A; Plate 22, C-D**). This is not surprising as Egypt's strongest trading partner, going back to the Old Kingdom but especially from the late Middle Kingdom, had been Byblos in coastal

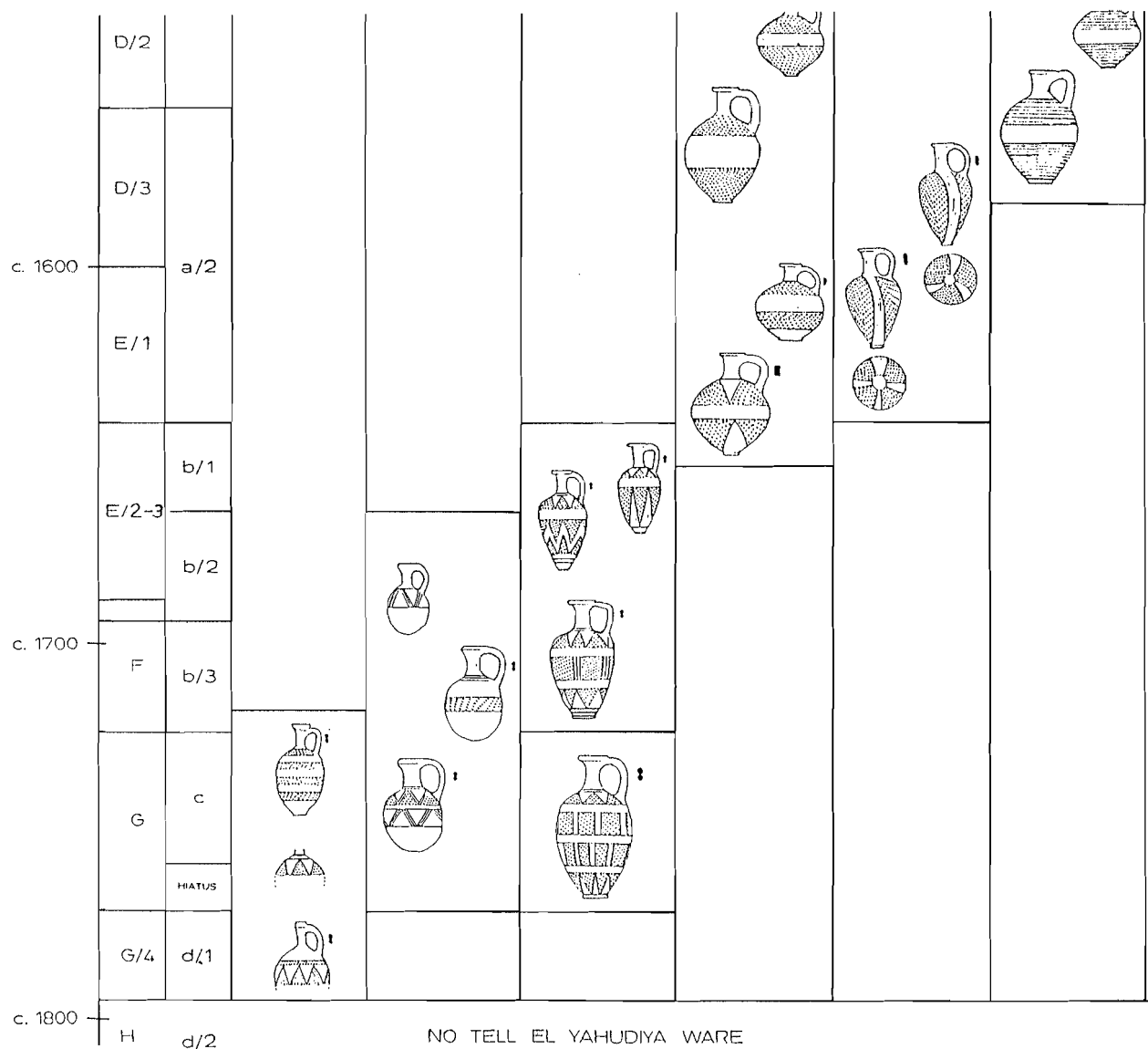


Fig. 46 The occurrence of types of Tell el-Yahudiya ware within the stratigraphy of Tell el-Dab'a.

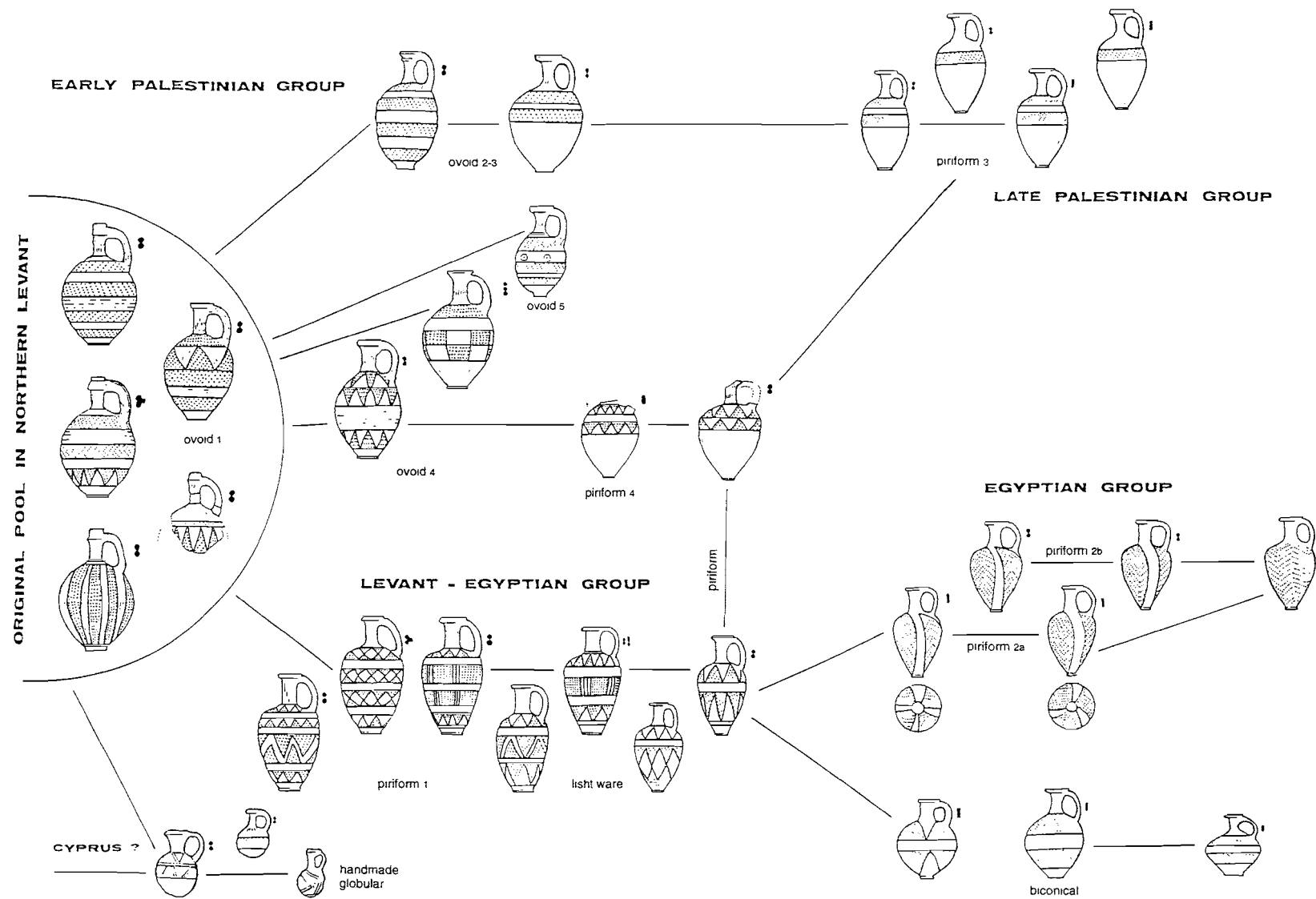


Fig. 47 The development of Tell el-Yahudiya ware.

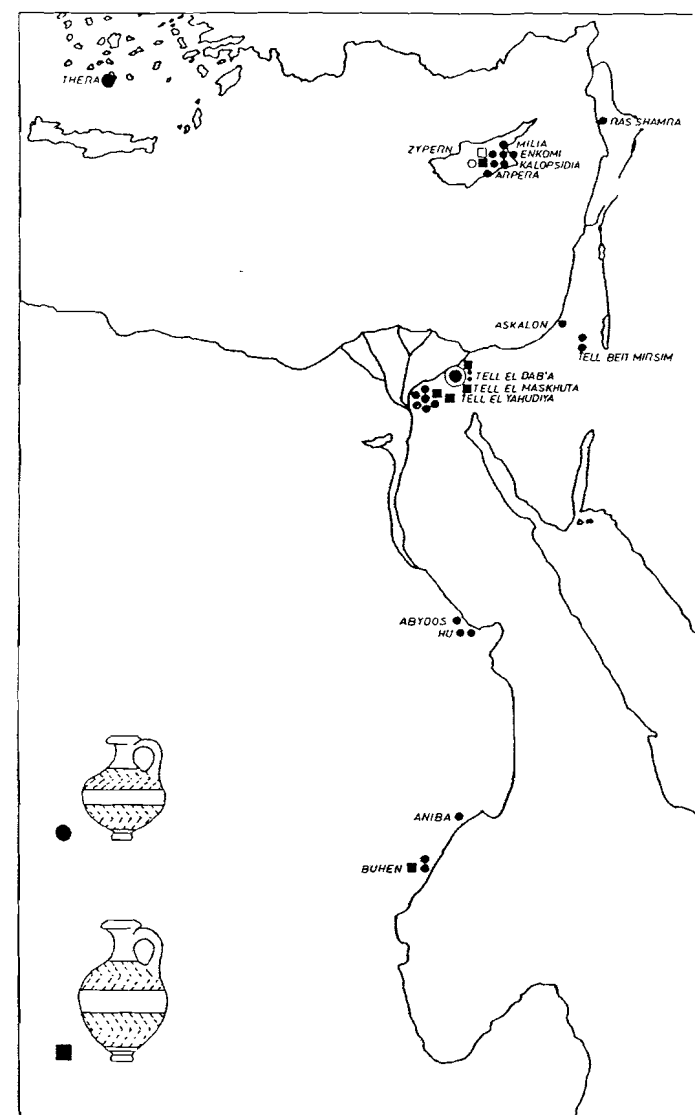
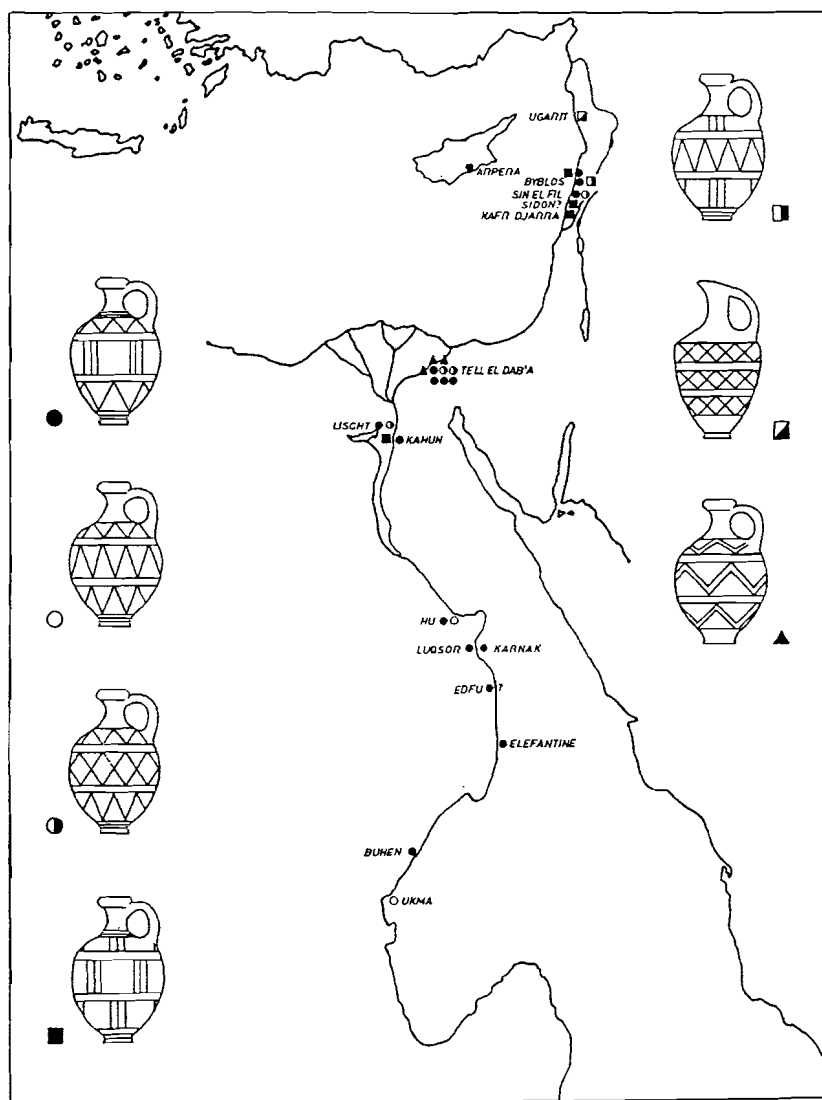


Fig. 48 Examples of the distribution-patterns of types of Tell el-Yahudiya ware:

(A) Piriform 1b jugs

(B) Biconical jugs

Lebanon. Byblos was the main distributor of Egyptian commodities in Syria-Palestine.<sup>76</sup> On the other hand, certain types of Tell el-Yahudiya ware, such as the ovoid 2 jugs, of which only two examples have been found at Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup>, have a more limited distribution and occur for the most part only in central inland Palestine. This indicates that the Middle Bronze Age world was not unified in its material culture, which may be a reflection of the political situation during the period.

Later, during the Hyksos Period, new types of Tell el-Yahudiya ware emerge (for example, **Plate 23, A**). Their distribution clusters primarily in southern Palestine, in northern Egypt and to some extent in coastal Palestine, in contrast to the typical Palestinian Tell el-Yahudiya ware. We believe that these clusters reflect the political influence of the kingdom of the Hyksos, which relied heavily on southern Palestine. The main stronghold there appears to have been Sharuhén, modern Tell el-<sup>c</sup>Ajjul.<sup>77</sup>

In addition to southern Canaan, another strong trading partner of the Hyksos kingdom seems to have been Cyprus, where many Tell el-Yahudiya jugs of Egyptian manufacture have been found. Some types, especially the biconical ones (**Fig. 48, B: Plate 23, B-C**), were held in especially high esteem there. The trade with Syria ceased during the Hyksos period, perhaps owing to the decline of the northern Syrian city states during MBIIB as we explained above. Other early Tell el-Yahudiya jugs, however, such as the globular hand-made types (from strata G-E/3 = c. 1750-1640 BC) developed from the Cypriot ceramic tradition (**Fig. 49**). As mentioned earlier, this is demonstrated by the use of a Cypriot ceramic technique for attaching the handle. It seems likely, therefore, that from stratum G onwards a Cypriot community lived among the Canaanites at Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup>.

With regard to the ceramic types which show a northern influence, there is conflicting evidence. Neutron activation analysis has shown that only in the earliest stratum H is there a substantial ceramic component of, most likely, northern origin, whereas in the succeeding phases the majority of pottery came from southern Palestine only.<sup>78</sup> This includes types which have hitherto not been found in southern Palestine, such as brown-polished jugs with spouts (**Plate 24, A-D**). How is this puzzle to be explained?



The only theory which would explain both the neutron activation data and the ceramic typology is the following: people from the northern Levant, which includes northern Palestine, settled in the south, for example at Tell el-<sup>c</sup>Ajjul, and continued to produce their traditional ceramic shapes locally. There is then the question of why they came to southern Palestine in the first place. May we suppose some kind of colonisation? If so, then we may link this movement with the settlement of Canaanites at Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup> and view it as a part of the same process of colonisation. Alternatively, could the Pharaohs of the late 12th and early 13th Dynasties have been responsible for the settlement of Canaanites in north-eastern Egypt and in southern coastal Palestine? Did the Egyptians set up stations for maritime travel between Egypt and Byblos and man those stations with people experienced in navigation, most probably people from the area of Byblos (**Fig. 50**)? Did they set up trading stations along the coast as well? Should we view in this light the Egyptian pots found at Tell Ifshar from the time of the mid 12th Dynasty (c.1900 BC)? It is probably premature to come to any conclusions. Nevertheless, it is not unlikely that the Egyptians set up such a system of harbour facilities along the coast between Egypt and Byblos, which was their strongest trading partner in the Levant during the Middle Kingdom and early 13th Dynasty.

An amphora from Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup> has a stamp on its handle bearing the inscription: *ḥ3ty-<sup>c</sup> Šimw*, 'the prince, Shimw' (**Fig. 51; Plate 25, A-B**). According to neutron activation analysis this amphora was produced in southern Palestine. The title and the name of the seal-owner provide an excellent parallel for those of the mayors of Byblos who adopted Egyptian titles as local princes during the late 12th and early 13th Dynasties (**Fig. 50**). It now appears that other princes besides those of Byblos took Egyptian titles and tried to develop a close relationship with Egypt, for example, the prince of Kamid el-Loz in the Beqa valley.<sup>79</sup> We have evidence of such a mayor from southern Palestine, most likely from Tell el-<sup>c</sup>Ajjul, since we suspect that a maritime and trade station of the late Middle Kingdom of Egypt may have been set up there. Kempinski is surely correct in identifying Tell el-<sup>c</sup>Ajjul with Sharuhén, the last stronghold of the Hyksos.<sup>80</sup> As mentioned above, there is every reason to believe that this was the residence of a branch

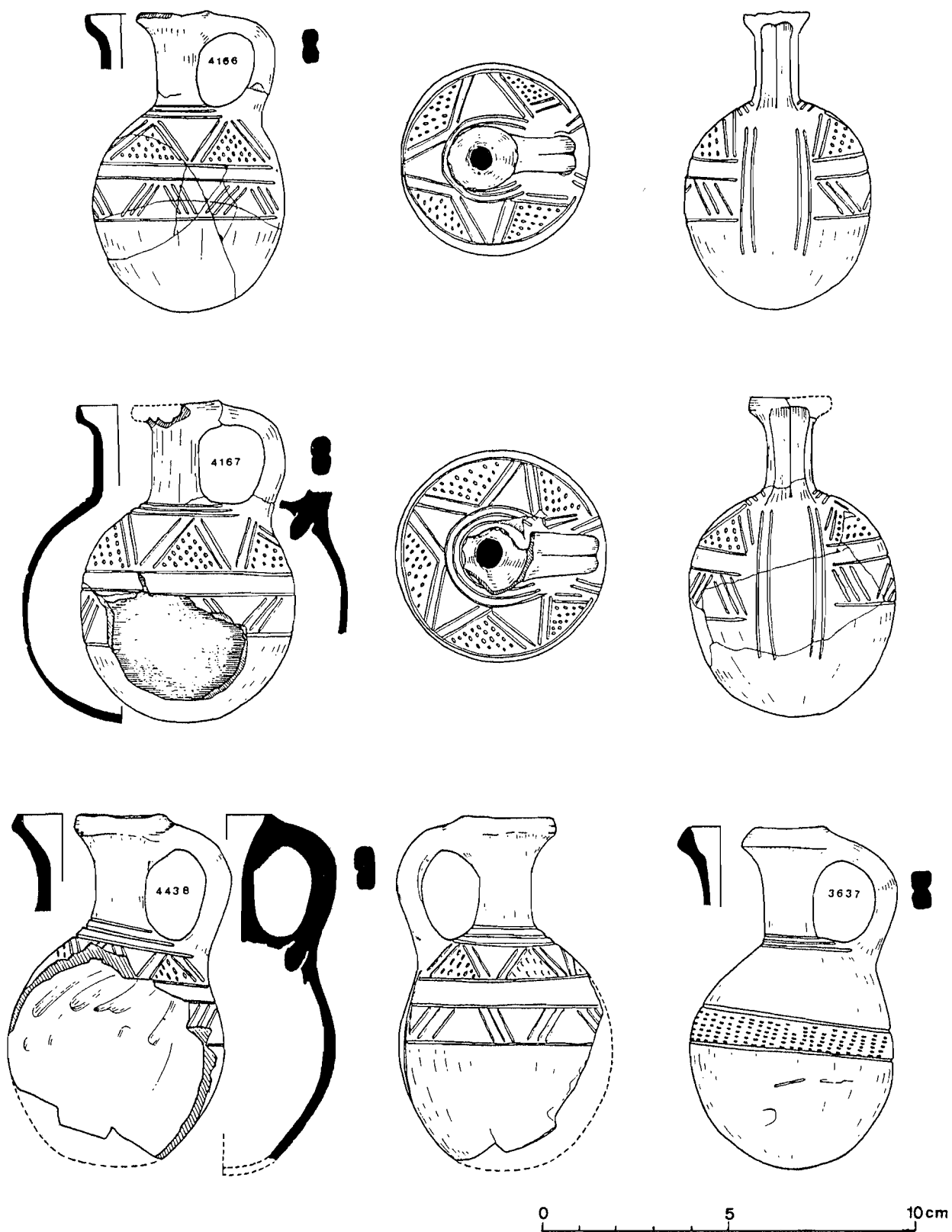


Fig. 49 Tell el-Yahudiya juglets from Tell el-Dab'a, made in the Cypriot ceramic tradition.

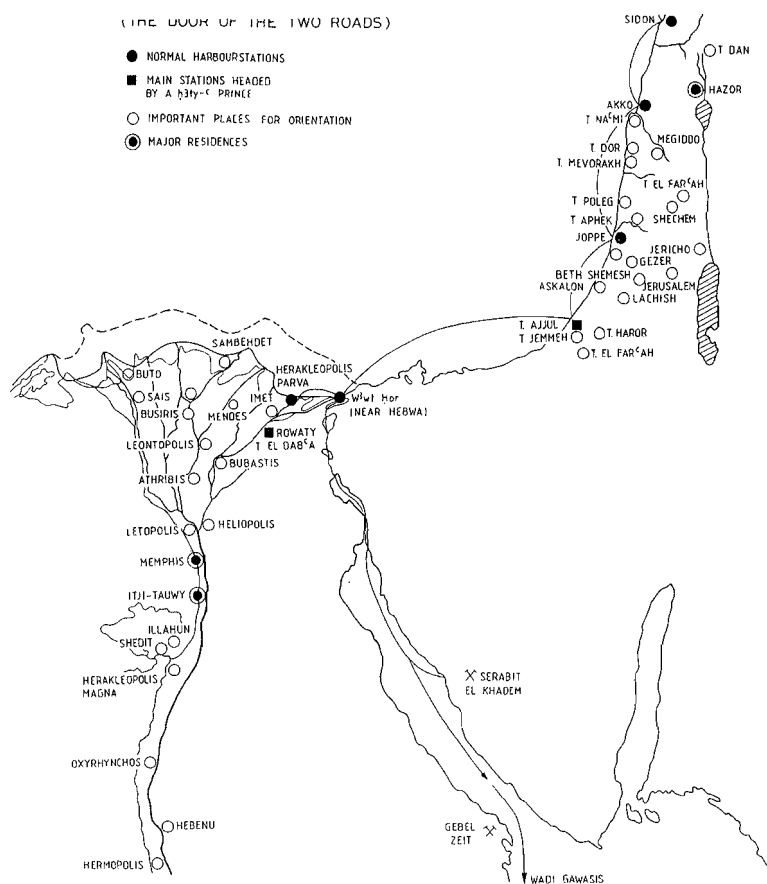


Fig. 50 Hypothetical reconstruction of Egyptian trade and maritime stations along northern Egyptian and Levantine coasts during the late 12th and 13th Dynasties.

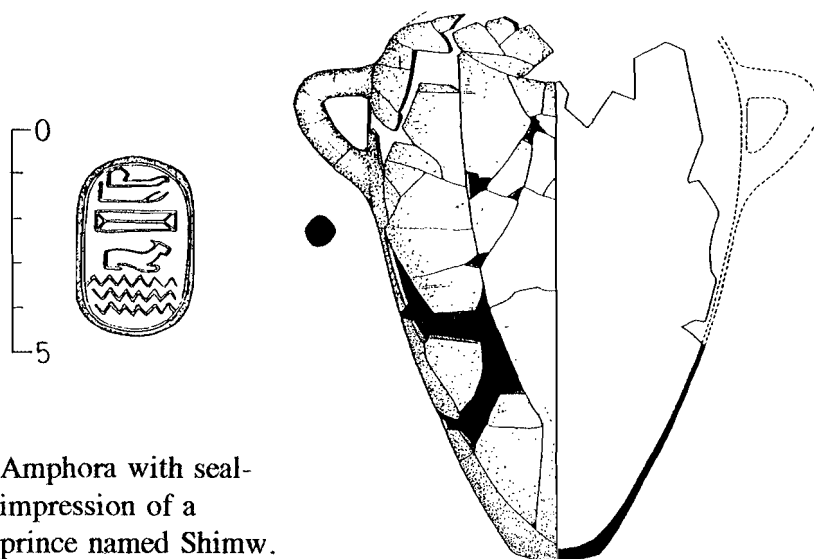


Fig. 51 Amphora with seal-impression of a prince named Shimw.

of the Hyksos dynasty, which can be identified to some extent by a series of scarabs found especially in Palestine.<sup>81</sup> This site controlled southern Palestine. Together with Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup>, it may be considered as one of the main pillars of Hyksos rule. It is for this reason that Sharuh<sup>n</sup> was finally besieged by Ahmose, after he had taken Avaris. He wanted to break the power of the Hyksos at the other end of its backbone, in southern Palestine.

The imports from southern Palestine were mainly amphorae (**Plate 25, A and C**) containing olive oil and most probably wine. It is not unlikely that wheat was also imported from there, as botanical analyses of the accompanying weeds suggest.<sup>82</sup> Cattle were also a traditional import from the Levant. From the Kamose stela we know that cedar-wood, lapis lazuli, silver, turquoise, battle-axes of bronze, different kinds of oils, fats, honey and several types of precious woods were imported from Retenu.<sup>83</sup>

In addition to southern Palestine, another major trading partner of that period was Cyprus, as already determined from the study of the Tell el-Yahudiya ware. An enormous increase in Cypriot pottery (as containers for commodities the identity of which remains to be determined) can be observed in strata D/3-2 (c. 1600-1530 BC). On the other hand, a large quantity of biconical jugs of Tell el-Yahudiya ware was exported from Egypt to Cyprus (**Fig. 48, B**). At Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup> the whole spectrum of early types of Late Cypriot pottery appears: White Painted V, White Painted VI, Proto White Slip, probably White Slip I and Bichrome ware (**Plate 26, A-C**).<sup>84</sup> No imported Base Ring ware<sup>85</sup> or Red Lustrous ware have yet been found in strata dating to the late Hyksos period.<sup>86</sup>

## **IX. The Hyksos citadel**

During the last few years, excavations in the region of Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup> have been concentrated on an area along the banks of the former Pelusiac branch of the Nile at 'Ezbet Helmi (**Figs 2, no. 2, and 55**).<sup>87</sup> This prominent place was strategically located, as it lay just south of the division of this branch into two courses. The site commanded the river and during the Hyksos Period was fortified with a buttressed wall (originally 6.20 m wide at the base, later enlarged to nearly 8.50 m) which on the north side was

The excavations in this area were initially begun in order to locate a 12th Dynasty installation. Over 100 years ago, a granite portal of King Amenemhat I belonging to a 'Djadu' or 'Djadjat' (maybe an administrative building) was found here (**Plate 27, A**). My colleague Peter Jánosi has been able to demonstrate that this portal was re-used during the Hyksos period or the early 18th Dynasty.<sup>88</sup> In its secondary location, the portal was probably white-washed, rendering the original inscriptions invisible. In all probability this portal had been taken from its original location in the 12th Dynasty town at 'Ezbet Rushdi. The main evidence for a citadel of the Hyksos was largely destroyed by the installations for a citadel of the early 18th Dynasty (see below). Besides the fortified enclosure wall, the following features could be identified:

1. In the eastern part of the citadel in area H/III a platform construction of mud-brick walls, at least 75 x 50 cubits (39.5 x 26 m, the full length is yet to be determined), was situated about 100 m south of the reconstructed continuation of the buttressed enclosure wall. In analogy with a bigger platform building of the early 18th Dynasty in area H/I we may see here a kind of minor fort or big watch-tower guarding the northern access to the citadel. This structure seems to have been surrounded by a separate enclosure wall.

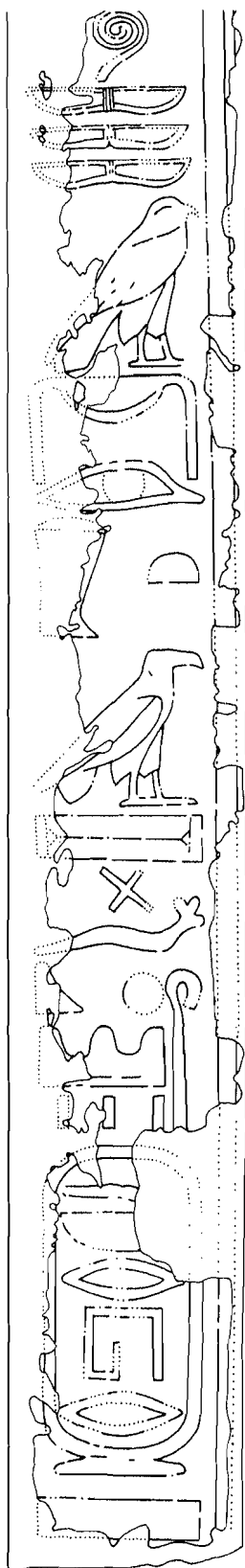
2. Southwest of this construction, in area H/II, under a huge palatial building of the early 18th Dynasty, there is some evidence of a big construction of the late Hyksos period.

3. We have evidence of two strata of gardens in the form of a series of tree-pits (each 1.50 - 1.60 m in diameter and about 0.80 m deep), set in a regular grid system of 5.5 - 6 cubits (**Plate 27, B**). This system runs parallel to the buttressed enclosure wall. The earlier stratum of this garden dates definitely to the late Hyksos period and, as it is unlikely that the big fortified wall only enclosed gardens, we have to assume a major, most probably royal residential area of this time. It is not unfeasible that this is the famous garden of the Hyksos Apophis referred to in the stela of Kamose, the Upper

Egyptian vassal of the Hyksos, who tried to shake off the yoke of the foreign rulers by an attack on Avaris. In his stela he boasts of having threatened his former overlord, 'the vile Asiatic', Apophis: 'I shall drink the wine of your vineyard, which the Asiatics whom I captured press for me. I lay waste your dwelling place, I cut down your trees'.<sup>89</sup> These are clearly references to the gardens of Apophis and it may well be that we have found these very gardens.

In addition to these features, further evidence of the Hyksos residence survives in the form of fragments of palatial architecture and stelae, some of which were reused in the 18th Dynasty. Among them are objects with royal inscriptions of the Hyksos Dynasty. In the palatial quarter of the early 18th Dynasty in area H/III we found a jamb of a monumental doorway of limestone with the full royal protocol of the Hyksos Seker-her (**Fig. 52**).<sup>90</sup> The name is hitherto unknown in this form and should be read 'Sikru-Haddu' ('memories of god Hadad').<sup>91</sup> The find circumstances in Avaris, the monumental dimensions of the piece and the full set of royal names suggest that this is one of the six major Hyksos of the 15th Dynasty, probably the uncorrupted version of the first Hyksos Salitis (Manethonian tradition), who is normally identified with King Shalek of the table of priestly ancestors from Saqqara.<sup>92</sup> The royal protocol can be read as follows: 'Horus-name: (not preserved), Nebti (the two ladies = mistresses/goddesses of Upper and Lower Egypt): Who is tying the bow countries, The Golden Horus: Who is determining his frontier, Hyksos: Seker-her/Sikru-Haddu'. This is the first example in a monumental inscription of the title 'Hyksos' being included in the royal protocol. It has been known hitherto only from scarabs.

There are other royal inscriptions of the Hyksos period from the area of the citadel. The dredging of a drainage-channel west of the El-Didamun feeder channel (near area H/III) has led to the recovery of a number of interesting inscribed blocks. Among them is a stela (**Fig. 53**) of the eldest son of King Khajan, named Janassi (according to T. Schneider, Jinassi-Ad = Western Semitic 'The father has elevated him'), who may have been the Hyksos 'Iannas' of the Manethonian list.<sup>93</sup> This stela probably stood together with another, each on either side of a processional road.



50 cm  
0

Fig. 52 Jamb of a doorway of the Hyksos Seker-her.



Fig. 53 Fragment of a stela mentioning the king's eldest son, Yanassy, son of Khayan. Height, 30 cm.

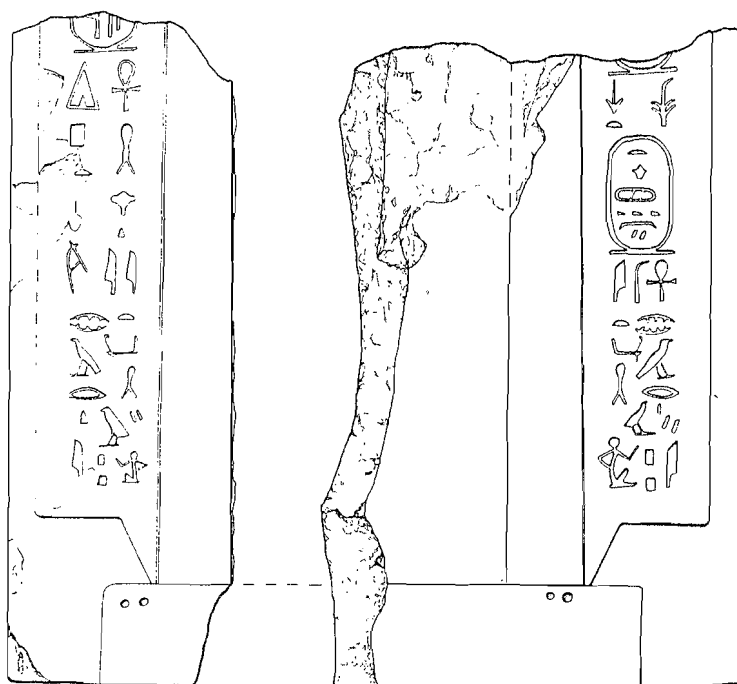


Fig. 54 Pseudo-naos with the name of the Hyksos Apophis and his sister, the princess Tany, mounted together with another fragment found at Tell el-Dab'a (right part after Simpson 1959: figs. 18-19). Height, 30 cm.

The fragment of a stela or pseudo-naos commissioned for the Hyksos Apophis and his sister and possible consort Tany has been known for some time.<sup>94</sup> Some years ago a second part of this monument was found near the stela of Janassi not far from the beginning of the road to 'Ezbet Helmi (**Fig. 54**).<sup>95</sup> The stela was donated by two private individuals without titles, their names inscribed in both their Western Semitic forms and their adopted Egyptian versions. The cultic image in the centre was most probably embossed on a golden or copper sheet, which is no longer preserved but can be reconstructed from the sockets for the nails. We may assume it bore images of Apophis and Tany alone, as no god is mentioned in the inscriptions. This unique monument may have come from a *ka*-chapel of Apophis and Tany and have been set up during the lifetime of the royal couple. Such finds lead one to wonder whether, in keeping with a known Near Eastern custom, there was not a royal necropolis within the citadel.

As the beginning of this citadel dates only to the late Hyksos period, the question arises as to where we might find the residence of the early Hyksos period. The Seker-her block suggests that it was nearby and that the area in which we are working now is an enlargement of an older, more modest royal residence, which was situated further towards the south-east.

## **X. The citadel of the early 18th Dynasty**

We may now consider the question of how we should envisage the condition of Avaris after its fall. The latest stratum of the Middle Bronze Age settlement at Tell el-Dab'a suggests that the town was abandoned. We have a little evidence for a conflagration in excavation area H/I but this may have been a very localised affair. For the most part, the settlement appears to have simply ceased. It is possible that the report of Flavius Josephus that the siege of Avaris was lengthy and that the Canaanites were eventually able to negotiate a safe retreat into southern Palestine had some truth in it. Some continuity of habitation can be observed within the temple precinct of Seth at Tell el-Dab'a.<sup>96</sup> It is now a major surprise to have firm evidence that the Hyksos citadel was re-occupied in the early 18th Dynasty with palatial installations, forming a part of the royal residence.



northern edge of the citadel in area H/I (Figs 55-6; Plate 26, A-D). This platform cut into the fortification wall but did not necessarily spoil it. It is possible that the wall remained intact and was now made even wider (from 12 to 16 cubits). A ramp, 6.40 m (= 12 cubits) wide, was attached to the eastern flank of the platform. In the northern continuation of this ramp, which also cuts into the fortification wall, are situated the blocks of the granite doorway of the 12th Dynasty mentioned above (Plate 27, A). As there is no 12th Dynasty stratum at 'Ezbet Helmi it is obvious that the doorway was reused and provided a riverside gate for the platform-building, giving access to the ramp (Figs 56-58). The doorway was most probably embedded secondarily in the fortification wall, at a time when no further danger was envisaged.

At first, it seemed certain that the platform dated to the late Hyksos period because walls of an early 18th Dynasty settlement run against the eroded northern ramp attached to it (Fig. 57).<sup>98</sup> However, the results of further excavation have forced a reconsideration. We have mentioned that the platform cuts into the fortification wall of late Hyksos times and covers a garden of the same period (Fig. 56). It is logical to assume, therefore, that it can date only to the very end of this period. Another important observation is that the platform has the same orientation as the palatial compound H/II-III of the early 18th Dynasty, while it is oblique to the orientation of the late Hyksos period stratum (Fig. 55). The only solution for this conflicting evidence is to date the platform to the years immediately after the fall of Avaris and assume it was in official use for only a short time.

This platform closely resembles the nearly 8 m high substructure of the so-called 'southern palace' at Deir el-Ballas, which is considered by Lacovara to have been a monumental watch-tower.<sup>99</sup> This is an important parallel because it also forms part of a royal citadel attributed to Ahmose. We should not forget, however, that a similar but more modest platform construction from the Hyksos period was found in the eastern part of the citadel at H/III (Fig. 55). A Near Eastern origin for such constructions cannot be

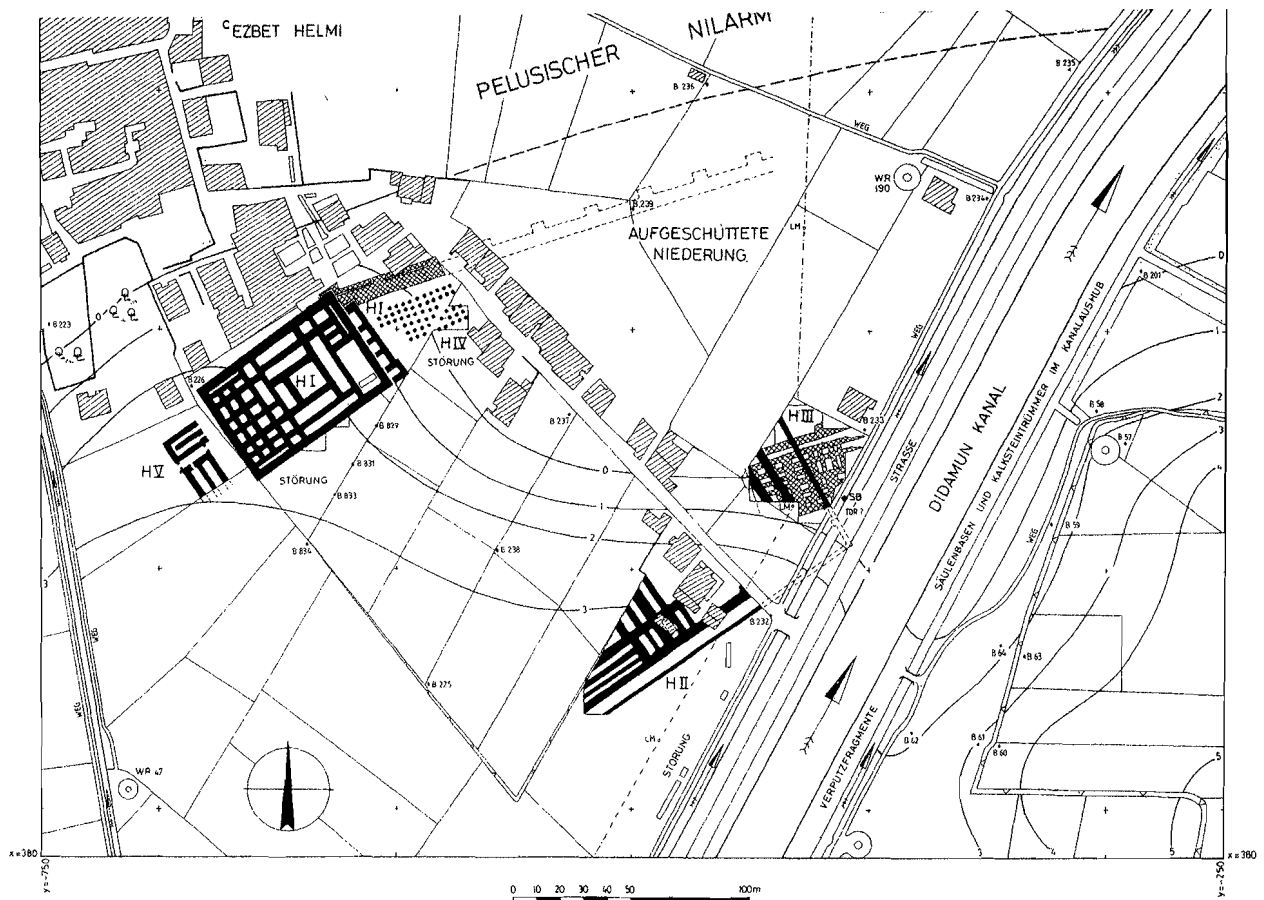


Fig. 55 Latest (1995) plan of the citadel of the late Hyksos period and the early 18th Dynasty at ʿEzbet Helmi/Tell el-Dabʿa (after Dorner).

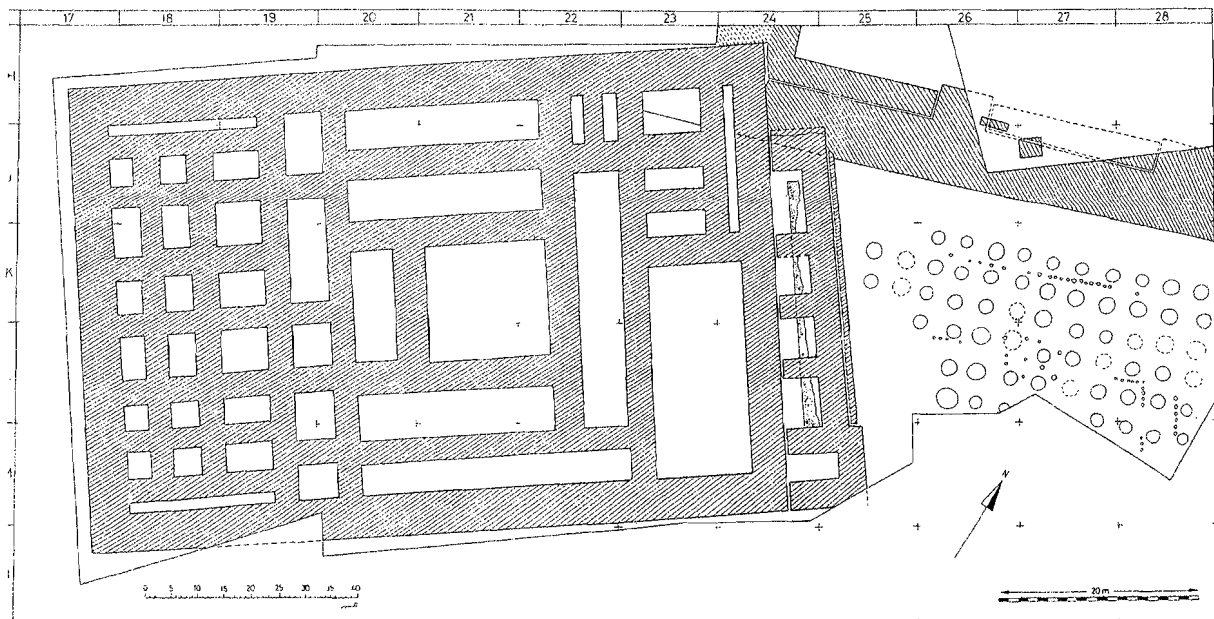


Fig. 56 Platform of a palatial fortress (H/I) of the early 18th Dynasty with remains of gardens at its eastern edge.

(Fig. 58). From this platform a magnificent view over the river could have been obtained. Besides its military function this platform must also have had a palatial and perhaps even cultic purpose, as it is certain that at least some of its rooms and the inner sides of its northern entrance were furnished with Minoan wall-paintings and stucco reliefs (see below).

About 150 m to the southeast of platform H/I the remains of a huge building compound, dating also to the early 18th Dynasty, have now been discovered (Fig. 55, areas H/II, H/III, Plate 29, A-B). The indications are that we have dug into the magazine tract of a palace (H/III). Interestingly, this building has a close counterpart in the 'northern palace' of the royal precinct of Ahmose at Deir el-Ballas.<sup>101</sup> Within a chamber of the building H/II a large deposit of votive vessels from the early 18th Dynasty has been found, among them tiny red-polished carinated bowls, strainers, dipper juglets, locally made miniature rhyta, and other kinds of miniature pottery.<sup>102</sup> From some compartments many fragments of magnificent craters of Bichrome ware have been retrieved.<sup>103</sup> They are of varying origin: some from Cyprus, others from Palestine. Thus the archaeological material from Tell el-Dab'a from the time of the early New Kingdom shows that the end of Hyksos rule did not mean the end of relations with the Eastern Mediterranean. On the contrary, amphorae and other vessels from Syria-Palestine continued to be imported in substantial quantities. The same is true for Cypriot imports. Now White Slip I ware, Cypriot Bichrome ware, Red Slip wheel-made ware, and Base Ring I ware appear more prominently among the discoveries. In addition, the first finds of imported pottery of MMIII and LMIA date within the citadel, unfortunately from secondary contexts so far, document mercantile connections with the Aegean.<sup>104</sup> Of particular interest are sherds of a jug or amphoriskos with a painted representation of a leopard in flying gallop chasing an ungulate.<sup>105</sup> This motif has parallels on Middle

ruled out. Similar platform-foundations were found on top of defensive ramparts at Ebla and Hazor, where they provided an overview of the defensive systems of these formidable towns.<sup>100</sup> We have, therefore, reconstructed this platform as a kind of elevated fortress, drawn from our knowledge of Egyptian Middle Kingdom military architecture in Nubia (**Fig. 58**). From this platform a magnificent view over the river could have been obtained. Besides its military function this platform must also have had a palatial and perhaps even cultic purpose, as it is certain that at least some of its rooms and the inner sides of its northern entrance were furnished with Minoan wall-paintings and stucco reliefs (see below).

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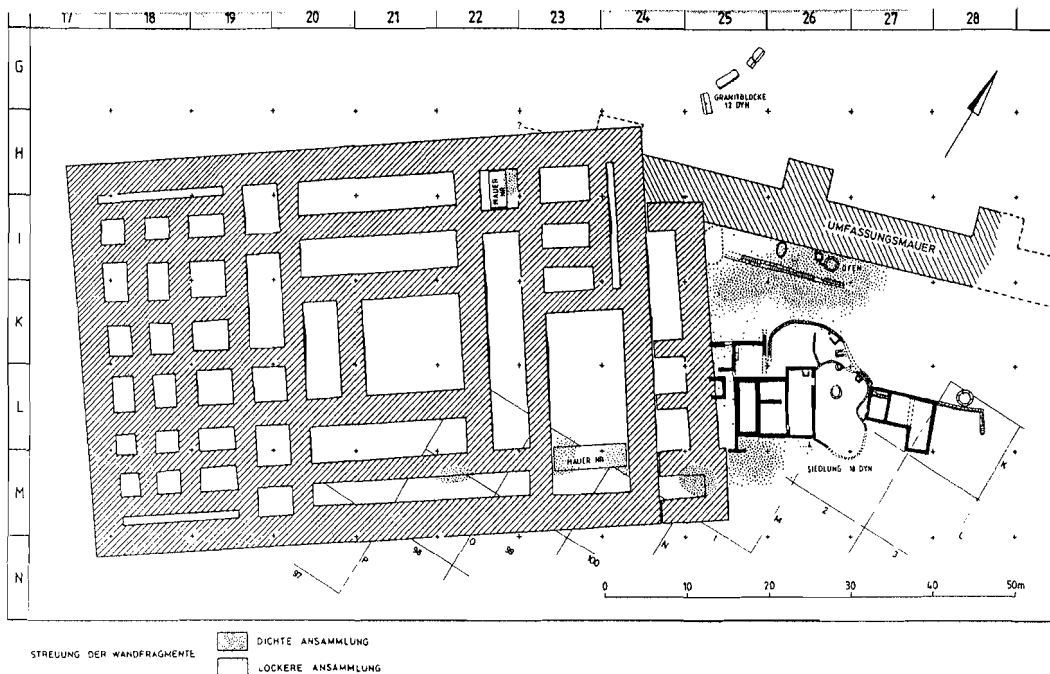


Fig. 57 Platform H/I of a palatial fortress with settlement remains of the first half of the 18th Dynasty. Clusters show the major dumps of the Minoan frescoes.

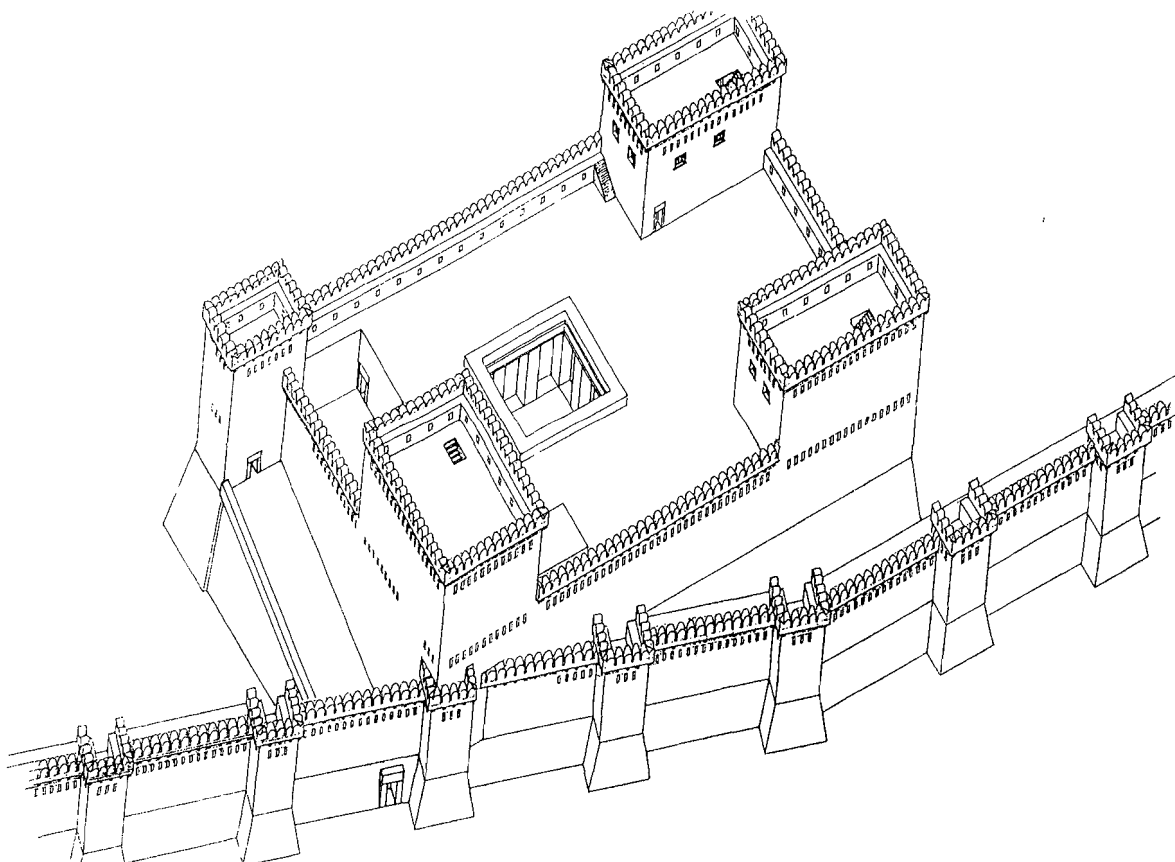


Fig. 58 Reconstruction of the palatial platform of the early 18th Dynasty with the secondary setting of the doorway of Amenemhat I from 'Ezbet Helmi (after an unpublished study for a model by Bietak and Wiplinger for an exhibition in Vienna 1994).

Cycladic pottery. Locally made funnel-shaped red-polished LMIA rhyta in both full and small scale can be taken as an indication of the presence of Minoans in the citadel, evidenced also by the mural paintings and stucco reliefs which have appeared in compound H/II, H/III, and especially around a monumental doorway in H/III.

To the east of the platform H/I, there was a middle-class settlement, which seems to have incorporated workshops. It reveals distinct stratigraphy.<sup>106</sup> The houses were constantly changed and renewed. The house-type of this settlement conforms to a well-known New Kingdom type of architecture (**Fig. 57; Plate 30, A-B**). Within the settlement numerous scarabs have been found, among them a series of royal scarabs. Their relative position is consistent with the succession of the named Pharaohs and covers the time from Ahmose to Amenhotep II (**Plate 31, A**). I have mentioned above that walls of this settlement run against the ramp of platform H/I and cover at least some of the wall-plaster fragments bearing Minoan frescoes. As it seems more persuasive now to date platform H/I and the frescoes to the beginning of the 18th Dynasty, and no longer to the Hyksos period, the beginning of this settlement should date to after Ahmose. Because of recent agricultural levelling we do not know if the settlement continued beyond the time of Amenhotep II.

New excavations in 1995 have revealed to the west of platform H/I a part of a huge compound (H/V), which is without doubt another royal building project of the first half of the 18th Dynasty (**Fig. 55**). Long narrow corridor-like rooms and enormous walls suggest a tract of magazines with at least one storey. They may belong to a temple, which still awaits excavation. In the corridors were dumps of faience objects, among them figurines, as well as lots of broken pottery, particularly Late Cypriot imports. It is premature to attempt to say when exactly this complex was constructed. It could have been built when platform H/I was in use (during Ahmose's reign) or soon afterwards. The collected pottery from the corridor debris would suggest the middle of the 18th Dynasty as a *terminus ante quem* for the end of its functioning. This would conform roughly with the latest date of the middle-class settlement east of the platform.

, . .

**B).** Everything has been levelled down by quarry activity in antiquity and by recent agriculture. To the east of the platform, covering gardens of the Hyksos period and the early 18th Dynasty, we found a layer of debris consisting of limestone chips and containing pieces of architecture such as column-plinths, roofs of shrines, the statue of a lion and a libation basin (**Plates 31, B and 32, A-B**) - in short, the remains of monumental architecture.<sup>107</sup> We also found fragments of royal statues of quartzite and other materials, possibly usurped from Middle Kingdom kings (**Plate 32, C-D**). Some of the remains may have come originally from the Hyksos citadel, but certainly originating from a New Kingdom palatial context is a fragment of a magnificent glass vessel with gold-coloured decoration which, according to Schlick-Nolte, could be a Near Eastern import and is the earliest such glass vessel known from Egypt.<sup>108</sup>

The major part of the debris north of platform H/I consisted not only of mud-brick bats but also of thousands of fragments of lime wall-plaster covered with paintings (**Fig. 57; Plate 33, A-B**). The motifs and style were quickly recognized to be Minoan.<sup>109</sup> Especially important are fragments from bull-leaping and bull-grappling scenes (**Plates III, A-B and VI, A-B**), some belonging to a tableau which can be reconstructed as a scene with two registers showing bulls, bull-leapers and bull-grapplers against a background in the form of a maze ('labyrinth') pattern of a type which Sir Arthur Evans suggested symbolised the palace of Knossos (**Plates IV-V**). Indeed the base of this scene can be reconstructed as a half-rosette-triglyphic frieze, which is a typical Minoan palatial motif, most probably originating from the palace of Knossos and later also used in the paintings of the Mycenaean royal centres.<sup>110</sup>

The maze-pattern has a similar but more elaborate parallel at Knossos.<sup>111</sup> While it may be tempting to view the combination of the bull-leaping ritual and the maze/labyrinth pattern here as an early representation of the famous myth of the Minotaur and the Labyrinth, it should be remembered that this myth is a much later tradition and there is so far no evidence that it goes back beyond the seventh century BC. The maze-

The superstructures of the citadel, which we may assign to Ahmose, are now barely preserved. Indeed, of the platform H/I we have only the foundations (**Plate 28, A-B**). Everything has been levelled down by quarry activity in antiquity and by recent agriculture. To the east of the platform, covering gardens of the Hyksos period and the early 18th Dynasty, we found a layer of debris consisting of limestone chips and containing pieces of architecture such as column-plinths, roofs of shrines, the statue of a lion and a libation basin (**Plates 31, B and 32, A-B**) - in short, the remains of monumental architecture.<sup>107</sup> We also found fragments of royal statues of quartzite and other materials, possibly usurped from Middle Kingdom kings (**Plate 32, C-D**). Some of the remains may have come originally from the Hyksos citadel, but certainly originating from a New Kingdom palatial context is a fragment of a magnificent glass vessel with gold-coloured decoration which, according to Schlick-Nolte, could be a Near Eastern import and is the earliest such glass vessel known from Egypt.<sup>108</sup>

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ornamental way or drawing the pavement of a court<sup>112</sup> or just a symbolic rendering of the arena. In the upper part of this tableau, the maze ends in a silhouette of a hill-landscape on which one or more sacred palm trees are represented.<sup>113</sup>

The best preserved fragment from this tableau is especially fascinating (**Plates III, A, and V**), in that it shows the head of a charging bull *en face*, while the leaper (or is it a bull-grappler?) with yellow skin is shown in profile grasping the bull around his neck. The unusual yellow skin has a parallel in the depiction of a pre-adolescent boy in an initiation ritual on the walls of Xeste 3 at Akrotiri, Thera.<sup>114</sup> There are also fragments of a second young yellow-skinned taureador, who seems to be falling from another bull. There are at least two pairs of bulls, each pair consisting of an ochre- and a blue-speckled animal (**Plate IV**). The second pair is placed in the upper register along the hill silhouette with the palm trees against a red background. This composition is to some extent reminiscent of the bull-catching scenes, with hilly ground and palm trees, on one of the two Vapheio cups, which may be roughly contemporary with our wall-paintings.<sup>115</sup>

Setting aside later representations in Mycenaean palaces, bull-leaping scenes in Minoan mural paintings have so far been found only at Knossos. Taking this exclusivity into account as well as the half-rosette-triglyphic frieze which seems to be symbolically connected with the palace of Knossos, we may conclude that we have here at Tell el-Dab'a a representation of the bull-leaping ground of the palace of Knossos, perhaps a replica of a Knossian painting which is no longer preserved.<sup>116</sup> The arena can perhaps be identified with the Western Court at Knossos, since it was situated according to our representation at the edge of open landscape but connected with the palace.

There are several other bull-leaping and bull-grappling scenes (**Plate VI, A-B**). In some cases only the legs of the leapers or fragments of the bull's hide are preserved. The scenes are mainly of small format, smaller than the taureador frescoes from Knossos but not of miniature size. There were, however, also fragments of half life-size representations of bulls in stucco relief. They were found, like most of the wall-paintings, just east of the ramp which gives access from the north to the palatial platform-building

(Fig. 57). As stucco reliefs were placed out of doors, their original location was probably near the northern entrance of the fortification wall, on one or both sides of the ramp. Such a situation would be very similar to that of the stucco relief-bulls at the northern entrance to the palace of Knossos. It may also be noted that another stucco relief, found in the palace area H/II, shows a limb of a life-size figure with white skin against a red background with some plants. This piece is reminiscent of the so-called 'Prince of the Lilies' from Knossos.

The debris east of platform H/I yielded many more motifs. There are thick plaster fragments of a floor-painting with an oblique maze-pattern in blue (**Plate VI, C**) and fragments showing acrobats, one of them with a plumed head-dress performing beside the sacred palm tree (**Plate VI, D**). Scenes depicting pairs of acrobats are known from Minoan and Mycenaean seal representations (**Fig. 59**).<sup>117</sup> The only painted parallel can be found in 'the African' from Thera, whose orientation should be corrected according to the nearly vertical line of the palm tree.<sup>118</sup> Other fragments depict landscape scenes, especially river landscape, but there is also a representation of Cretan craggy mountains, as well as hunting scenes with dogs and scenes of lions and leopards in flying gallop chasing mountain goats and fallow deer (**Plates VII, A-D and VIII, A**).<sup>119</sup> Particularly imposing is a male bearded head of nearly life-size (**Plate VIII, B**), possibly a priestly figure,<sup>120</sup> and there is another figure in frieze-size which we may identify as a priest or dignitary dressed in a robe. He is shown against an architectural background.<sup>121</sup> From area H/III - from around a doorway with a portico in an undisputed early 18th Dynasty context - we have decorative paintings with an ivy leaf- and loop-pattern. For the loop there is a good parallel from the palace of Phaistos.<sup>122</sup>

The style and execution of the paintings are extraordinary, although differences in quality can be observed. There is no doubt that Minoan artists were employed.<sup>123</sup> This is clear from the use of the same techniques as are to be observed in Minoan wall-paintings, involving a basic coating of two or three layers.

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The style and execution of the paintings are extraordinary, although differences in quality can be observed. There is no doubt that Minoan artists were employed.<sup>123</sup> This is clear from the use of the same techniques as are to be observed in Minoan wall-paintings, involving a basic coating of two or three layers of lime plaster, the surface polished with a stone float and the paintings then executed in a combination of fresco and secco. Other techniques, such as the application of string lines as guides for the painting

Minoan motifs, leave no doubt as to the origin of the artists. The style of painting is not provincial in any way. Most of it is of a high quality and compares well with the best of the Minoan paintings at Knossos. The same is true of the quality of the plaster, which is superior to the quality of the plaster at Thera and compares well with that of Knossian plaster.<sup>124</sup> The choice of colour and iconographic details, such as the rendering of the shaved scalp of youths in blue, also have good parallels at Thera.<sup>125</sup> The rendering of the wing of a griffin with hanging running spirals at Thera in Xeste 3, Room 3a (**Plate VIII, D**), behind the representation of the 'mistress of the animals',<sup>126</sup> is also found among fragments from Tell el-Dab'a not only in small scale (**Plate VIII, C**) but also in large, as in the throne room of Knossos. Such iconographic details and the more realistic style date the paintings at Tell el-Dab'a to the Late Minoan IA period, a time from which we have only a few preserved paintings in Crete. This makes the Tell el-Dab'a paintings particularly valuable, as they fill a gap in the canon of Minoan art.

If our assumption is correct - that not only the paintings in area H/III and H/II but also those from the secondary dumps north of the platform H/I date to the beginning of the 18th Dynasty after the fall of Avaris (after *c.* 1530 BC) - then the paintings at Thera should be roughly contemporary. This dating is corroborated by the presence of Late Cypriot White Slip I ware at both sites.<sup>127</sup> So far White Slip I ware has appeared in secure contexts at Tell el-Dab'a only from stratum C (18th Dynasty) onwards. A Proto White Slip bowl has been found in a tomb dating to the end of the Hyksos Period (late stratum D/2).<sup>128</sup> If we were to adopt the more recent high chronology for the Santorini (Thera) explosion at about 1628 BC, based on radiocarbon and dendrochronology,<sup>129</sup> we would have to raise the dates of Egyptian chronology by some 130 years. Apart from the serious problems this would cause to the Egyptian chronological framework and astrochronology, we would have to fill 130 years of Egyptian history. Currently no Egyptologist would accept such a proposition.

In connection with the Santorini correlation there is another important observation to be made. Within the middle-class settlement east of platform H/I and within the palatial



Fig. 59 Acrobats with plumed head-dresses on a seal from Knossos (Evans 1935: fig. 443).

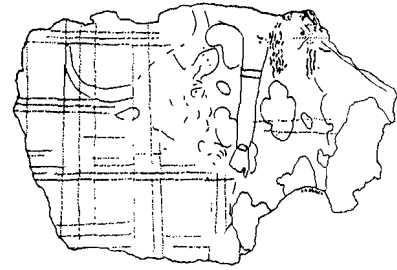


Fig. 60 String lines made in preparation for the maze-pattern (wall-painting fragment F4).

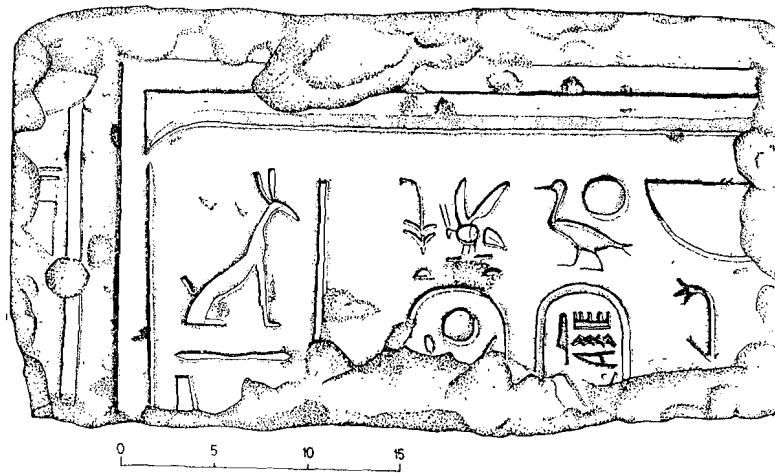


Fig. 61 Lintel of Horemheb dedicated to the god Seth, from the temple of Seth at Tell el-Dab'a (late 18th Dynasty).

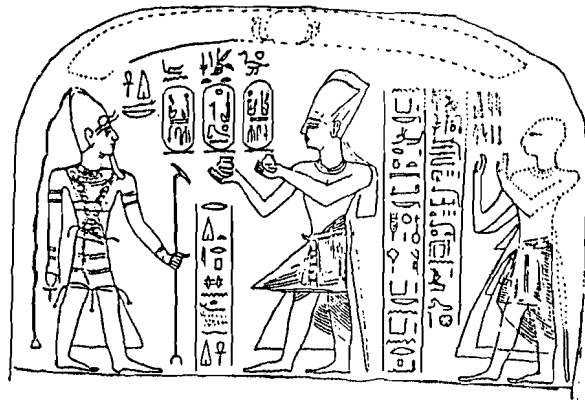


Fig. 62 The upper part of the 'Four-hundred Year Stela' showing the image of Seth (on the left) as a Canaanite god (Montet 1933: pl. XIII) (19th Dynasty).

found, which the sea probably carried to the coast near Avaris (**Plate 34, A-B**).<sup>130</sup> Neutron activation analysis carried out at the reactor Seibersdorf, Vienna, and the results of other scientific investigations (undertaken by Prof. Anton Preisinger, Technical University, Vienna) indicate that the pumice originated from the explosion of the volcano of Santorini. Its chronological context at Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup> within a single restricted stratum of the New Kingdom dates it to sometime after the reign of Ahmose and before that of Thutmose III (c. 1500 BC). This is perfectly in keeping with the traditional dating of the volcanic eruption of Santorini. Adherents of the high chronology for the explosion of Santorini have suggested that this pumice may have lain in the vicinity of Avaris for a long time and was only picked up during the time of the New Kingdom. This is possible, as the materials retrieved in H/I and H/III were collected in workshops. But in that case it is strange that no pumice has been found at Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup> in strata of the Hyksos period, although major areas of the latter period have been investigated since 1966. Pumice only appeared when we began to excavate New Kingdom remains in three different areas. One lump also appeared in area A/II-k/13 above the Hyksos period; however, it was in a secondary context. Mohammed <sup>c</sup>Abd el-Maksoud, the excavator of Tell el-Habwa in Northern Sinai, informs me that similar lumps of pumice have been found on top of the Second Intermediate Period occupation at that site. Scientists have proved that these pieces also originated from Santorini. Several more lumps were retrieved by <sup>c</sup>Abd el-Maksoud on a nearby ancient seashore.<sup>131</sup> A thorough search for further volcanic emissions in New Kingdom and Hyksos period levels at Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup> is planned. This research should certainly be useful for synchronising the chronology of Egypt and the Aegean world and there is a very good chance that it will finally be possible to link firmly the eruption of Santorini and Late Minoan and Late Helladic chronology with Egyptian stratigraphy and chronology.

Returning to the discovery of Minoan wall-paintings in the 18th Dynasty palatial complex, we are confronted with the problem of how to explain them. Minoan wall-paintings have also been found in other centres of the Levant, in contexts of the late

Middle Bronze Age culture, such as at Alalakh, Kabri and probably Qatna. The excavators of Kabri have suggested that the employment of Minoan artists (who may perhaps have been sent by the king of Knossos as a show of favour to friendly kings and princes in the Levant) indicates the high esteem in which Minoan art was held. Niemeier<sup>132</sup> sees support for this view in the mythological poetry of Ugarit, which refers to the bringing of the god of handicrafts and art Kothar wa-Khasis<sup>133</sup> from his throne in *Kptr* (Kaphtor) to build a palace for the god Baal. This theory may explain one aspect of the appearance of Minoan art in late Middle Bronze Age/early Late Bronze Age contexts in mythical terms, wherein the earthly king is equated with Baal. The myth, however, reverses the original situation. It was the employment of Minoan artists by certain kings in the Levant which helped to create this detail in the Baal myth. Niemeier's theory presents Minoan art in the Levant with a more or less decorative purpose. It does not explain why the early 18th Dynasty (most probably Ahmose) employed Minoan and not Egyptian artists to decorate the palaces. As Minoan art is primarily concerned with the ideology of the ruling class and with ritual,<sup>134</sup> we must find another reason for its appearance in Egypt and the Levant.

It is premature to attempt a definitive explanation at this point. Clearly, however, something in Minoan art must have had great appeal for the new Egyptian dynasty. A key element for our understanding may be the bull-leaping ritual, which appears prominently among the recovered scenes at Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup>. In the known wall-paintings of the Minoan world this ritual is only represented at Knossos. Its performance seems to have been confined exclusively to this most powerful court.<sup>135</sup> Representations of bull-leaping can be considered distinctive of royal art, as may also those of the half-rosette-triglyphic frieze, the griffins and the depiction of hierarchy in nature in the form of felines chasing other animals. Such symbolism shows clearly that the Minoan paintings at Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup>/Avaris are to be seen in the context of a royal architecture that was of equal political importance to that of Knossos. This royal symbolism is not found in those lesser centres of the Levant where Minoan paintings appear.



One very attractive hypothesis that has suggested itself is that of a dynastic marriage.<sup>136</sup> The griffin representations are especially appropriate to such a scenario. According to Reusch and Marinatos, griffins were primarily the protective companions of goddesses and queens.<sup>137</sup> Just as a heraldic pair of griffins decorate the throne room at Knossos, so our large griffin could equally be from a queen's throne room, if it is not - as at Thera - part of a divine representation.

King Ahmose, the founder of the 18th Dynasty and most probably the builder of the citadel of the early 18th Dynasty at Avaris, fits particularly well into the picture of Minoan connections. A ceremonial axe of his depicts in niello-inlay the Minoan or at least Aegean griffin<sup>138</sup> and one of his daggers, which could have been produced by an Aegean artist, is decorated with typical Minoan symbolic motifs like inverted landscape and a lion in flying gallop chasing a calf, done in the same technique.<sup>139</sup> The base of the hilt consists of a bull bucranium worked in gold. The king's wife, Ahmose Nefertari, was not of course of Minoan origin since she was Ahmose's sister, as was another possible wife of his, Ahmose Meritamun. Perhaps Ahmose had another wife of foreign origin, for whom we have no independent evidence at present. One should mention, however, the puzzling title of his mother, Queen Ahhotep II: *hnwt idbw H3w-nbwt*, 'Mistress of the shores of Hau-nebut.'<sup>140</sup> The latter is a geographical term once thought to be connected with the Aegean islands,<sup>141</sup> an identification rejected by Vercoutter and Vandersleyen, who would prefer to see it as a more general term for the seaboard countries, especially in Asia, as opposed to *t3*, the land of the Nile valley, and *h3st*, the hill country, which also figure in the full titulary of this queen.<sup>142</sup> The mounting evidence from Tell el-Dab'a for the early 18th Dynasty's strong Minoan connections is perhaps a good reason to reconsider both the meaning of this unique title and the position of the queen within the 17th Dynasty.

Further speculation on the subject is beyond the scope of this paper. A more general consideration is, however, in order. That there existed intensive contacts at the highest level between the rising land power, Egypt, and the leading seapower of the time, the Minoan Thalassocracy, is very likely. Perhaps there was a political deal similar to that

struck by a later namesake of our King Ahmose, better known under the Greek version of his name, Amasis, with Polykrates of Samos. This tyrant had built up the most formidable seapower in the eastern Mediterranean and was considered an important ally by Amasis (c.570-526 BC), who foresaw a Persian invasion of Egypt. It is not impossible that the earlier Ahmose, having ousted the Hyksos from Egypt, feared an attempt by his foes to retake the eastern Delta by means of a surprise attack, only possible by sea. In such a situation, an alliance with the Minoans would have been highly advantageous. In return for protecting the sea-approaches to Egypt, the Minoans might have secured harbour facilities and access to those precious commodities (especially gold) for which Egypt was famous in the outside world. Such contacts at the beginning of the 18th Dynasty would have paved the way for the Minoan trade delegations so familiar to us from wall-paintings in Theban tombs of the first half of the 18th Dynasty.

Finally, the question arises: what was the function of this early 18th Dynasty occupation on top of the former Hyksos citadel which was restricted to the area around 'Ezbet Helmi? The parallelism of platform H/I and the palace compound H/II, H/III with the southern and northern palaces of the royal residence of Ahmose at Deir el-Ballas, called Sedjefa-tawy,<sup>143</sup> as well as the monumental dimensions, indicates a royal building compound which can only be associated with Ahmose. He had conquered Avaris most probably after the fifteenth or even eighteenth year of his reign.<sup>144</sup> He may well have needed a base and residence for his campaigns in southern Palestine near Egypt's north-eastern border. The extremely favourable and strategically important location of Tell el-Dab'a/Avaris on the Pelusiac branch of the Nile, within the doorway to the north-eastern Nile Delta, gives reason to conclude that again in the early 18th Dynasty, as at the end of the 12th and early 13th Dynasties, the place was put to use as a military base and probably as a dockyard for the preparation of expeditions to the Near East.

Indeed we have evidence that troops were stationed here in the form of a series of bone, flint and bronze arrowheads and carefully prepared stone missiles, found within the magazines and open forecourt of the palatial compound H/II-III and the middle-class settlement in H/I.<sup>145</sup> Sherds of Kerma ware, among them house-ware, retrieved from early

...from Egyptian deposits and from unpublished contexts in IV/1 and IV/III, endorse the argument of Janine Bourriau that Kerma pottery in Egypt dates largely to the time of the New Kingdom and should be connected with Nubian soldiers in the service of the early 18th Dynasty kings.<sup>146</sup> In the open forecourt of the palatial compound H/III numerous post-holes have been found, suggestive of the remains of a camp, perhaps for soldiers. There may also be some evidence for the presence of Aegean soldiers, as a bundle of bronze arrowheads, originally carried in a net, found beside a wall, seem to be of Late Helladic type.<sup>147</sup>

The important collections of foreign pottery show that, in addition to the military purpose of the base, trading was still a prominent activity and that Avaris remained an important meeting-place between Egypt and the Eastern Mediterranean world. In the light of such evidence, it is puzzling that we do not hear anything of Avaris during the 18th Dynasty in connection with military campaigns and trading expeditions to Asia. Perhaps another name was given to the settlement. In this regard, I would like to draw attention to a suggestion made by French Egyptologists and by Labib Habachi that the famous 18th Dynasty harbour and dockyard Peru-nefer (= 'happy journey') was not situated at Memphis, as previously supposed, but at Tell el-Dab'a.<sup>148</sup> Such an interpretation would explain the presence in Peru-nefer of Canaanite cults,<sup>149</sup> which had a long tradition in ancient Avaris. We are lacking, however, the epigraphic and archaeological evidence to prove this identification, though we hope to find it in the near future.

The region of Avaris was also involved in another important chapter of ancient Egyptian history. The royal residence of Piramesse, which is being studied at present in close co-operation with the Pelizaeus-Museum, Hildesheim, is located to the north of Tell el-Dab'a at Qantir (Figs 1-2). In the immediate vicinity of this famous residence of Ramesses II, excavations directed by Edgar Pusch have uncovered barracks for charioteers, stables of royal dimensions and military workshops of the 19th Dynasty.<sup>150</sup> Avaris was still in existence at this time. In keeping with its maritime traditions it was the harbour for Piramesse,<sup>151</sup> and it continued to house the god Seth (Fig. 61), who had retained his Asiatic image up to the Ramesside period (Fig. 62). The 19th Dynasty most

18th Dynasty deposits and from unstratified contexts in H/I and H/III, endorse the argument of Janine Bourriau that Kerma pottery in Egypt dates largely to the time of the New Kingdom and should be connected with Nubian soldiers in the service of the early 18th Dynasty kings.<sup>146</sup> In the open forecourt of the palatial compound H/III numerous post-holes have been found, suggestive of the remains of a camp, perhaps for soldiers. There may also be some evidence for the presence of Aegean soldiers, as a bundle of bronze arrowheads, originally carried in a net, found beside a wall, seem to be of Late Helladic type.<sup>147</sup>

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probably originated here. The god Seth, who is the personification of the continuum, again became a dynastic god, 'the father of the fathers' of the 19th Dynasty. The area became once more the capital of Egypt, not only for reasons of sentiment connected with the origin of the dynasty, but because of its enormous strategic importance for international policy.

1. For literature on the excavations, see Bietak 1991a, 17f.
2. Naville 1887, 21-3.
3. Hamza 1930.
4. Habachi 1954, 443-8, 558ff.
5. Montet 1957.
6. Bietak 1975, 47-112.
7. Dorner in Bietak, Dorner, Hein and Jánosi 1994, and Dorner in preparation.
8. For overview of results, see Pusch 1993.
9. Bietak 1975, figs. 9-10, map 4.
10. Boessneck and von den Driesch 1992.
11. Adam 1959.
12. Czerny 1991; Bietak and Eigner in preparation.
13. Adam 1959, 216, pl. IX.
14. Czerny 1991, 151-6, pl. 116, a-b.
15. Adam 1959.
16. Kees 1962.
17. Eigner 1985.
18. van den Brink 1982.
19. Newberry 1893, pls. 16, 31, 47.
20. Posener 1957; Luft 1993.
21. Gardiner, Peet and Černý 1955, 19, 205f.; Černý 1935.
22. Gardiner, Peet and Černý 1952, pls. 37 (112), 39 (115), 44 (103), 85 (405); Černý 1935, figs. 2-5.
23. Gardiner 1947, 142\*-149\*; see also Fecht 1984, 473-7.
24. Atzler 1972, 17-44.
25. Gardiner, Peet and Černý 1952, pl. 51 (163); 1955, 147, no. 163.
26. Gardiner, Peet and Černý 1955, 101 (93), 104 (95); 1952, pl. 30.
27. Gardiner, Peet and Černý 1955, 11-13.
28. Bietak 1988.
29. Janine Bourriau, pers. comm.
30. Dorothea Arnold, pers. comm.
31. Bietak 1991b, 62-4, fig. 10, pls. 16-17.
32. Matthiae 1990, 425, fig. 21.

33. Bietak 1984b, 325-32; Eigner 1985; Dorner 1986-7; Bietak 1991b, 58-72; Bietak and Eigner in preparation.
34. No bases were preserved; the position of the columns was, however, recognisable from the foundation pits filled with sand.
35. For literature on the Senet game, see Pusch 1984, 855.
36. Bietak, Dorner, Hein and Jánosi 1994.
37. Emery 1961, fig. 90; O'Connor 1985.
38. Settgast 1963, 65-74, figs. 1-7, pl. 6.
39. Bietak 1994a.
40. Literature in Bietak 1991b, 54, n. 24
41. Stiebing 1971, 114-6; van den Brink 1982, 74-82.
42. Stiebing 1971; van den Brink 1982.
43. Bietak 1991b, 67, fig. 15, pls. 22, c and 23, b; 1995, 20, pl. 14, 2; on the cultural setting and affinities of the weapons and other equipment at Tell el-Dab'a, see Philip 1989 and 1995.
44. Bietak 1991b, pl. 22, A, B, D.
45. Porada 1984; for the importance of the snake as a personification of the sea (Yam/Leviathan), see Uehlinger 1990.
46. Bietak 1990.
47. Walberg 1991b; Bietak 1995, 19; Warren 1995, 3.
48. Bietak 1984b, 330, fig. 7.
49. Walberg 1991a, 111-12 and frontis; Bietak 1995, 19-20, pl. 14, 1; Warren 1995, 3.
50. Habachi 1954, 458-70, pls. VI and IX.
51. Matthiae 1980, 50-62; Scandone Matthiae 1979 and 1982.
52. Matthiae 1990, 417-22, figs. 17-19.
53. Teissier in preparation.
54. Bietak 1981, fig. 2; Bietak 1991a, 27-34, plan 2.
55. Boessneck and von den Driesch 1992, 28f.
56. Boessneck and von den Driesch 1992, 24f.
57. The NAA were carried out by J. Huntoon, G. Haarbottle and P. McGovern. McGovern is now evaluating the material at the Department of Chemistry of the University Museum of Pennsylvania.
58. Maguire 1986; 1992; 1995.
59. Bietak 1989b, 8.
60. Goedicke 1984; 1986.
61. Winkler and Wilfing 1991, 122-37.
62. Kunter 1977; Winkler and Wilfing 1991, 90-120.

63. Pritchard, 1969, 482.
64. Bietak 1984c, 62-5, 75, figs. 1-2, pl. 1.
65. Replacing the older name (see above with n. 13); cf. Černý 1963; 89; Van Seters 1966, 149-51; Atzler 1972.
66. Or *imy-r htmt* according to Franke 1988.
67. Bietak 1991a, 51-60, fig. 26/1
68. Kenyon 1960, fig. 117; cf. Bietak 1984b, 342, fig. 12.
69. van den Brink 1982, 93.
70. Bietak 1989c.
71. Gratien 1977, 110ff.
72. Bietak 1994b and c.
73. It seems that the tradition of placing the graves near or within the settlement, as was the practice in the Neolithic and Chalcolithic settlements of the Delta, did not continue as a Delta burial custom.
74. Bietak 1989b.
75. Contra Kaplan 1980; NAA by J. Huntoon and P. McGovern has shown clearly that the early Tell el-Yahudiya Ware at Tell el-Dab'a was produced from Redfield clay.
76. Weinstein 1975, 7-10, fig. 3
77. Bietak 1989b.
78. McGovern in preparation (see n. 57).
79. Edel 1983, 38, fig. 3.
80. Kempinski 1974.
81. Kempinski 1985; 1990.
82. Thanheiser 1987.
83. Habachi 1972, 34 (7-18).
84. Maguire 1995.
85. A jug of Base Ring I ware has, however, been found within a late Second Intermediate Period context at Memphis (information courtesy of Janine Bourriau).
86. This observation supports the thesis of Kathryn Erikson 1993.
87. Areas H/I, H/II and H/V were supervised by Josef Dorner and Peter Jánosi, H/III by Manfred Bietak and Josef Dorner.
88. Jánosi in Bietak, Dorner, Hein and Jánosi 1994, 22-7.
89. Habachi 1972, 36.
90. Bietak in Bietak, Hein et al. 1994.
91. Schneider 1994, 275.
92. Porter and Moss 1979, 666.



93. Bietak 1981, 71; Görg 1981, 73; Bietak in Bietak, Hein et al. 1994, 155-6, no. 133; Schneider 1994, 137.
94. Simpson 1959; Hein and Satzinger 1993, 162-4.
95. Bietak in Bietak, Hein et al. 1994, 154, nos. 130-1.
96. Bietak 1985, 273-8, figs. 4, 17 and 5, 21-5.
97. Jánosi in Bietak, Dorner, Hein and Jánosi 1994, 30-1, fig. 10; Bietak 1995, 20, pl. 15, 1-2.
98. Cf. n. 96 and Jánosi 1995a-b; Bietak 1995, 20-1.
99. Smith 1958, 156-9, figs. 51-2; Lacovara 1990, 5, 26, 30, 40, pl. VII.
100. Kempinski 1992, 132-3, figs. 13-14.
101. Smith 1958, 156-9, fig. 52; Lacovara 1990, 2-3, 28, 31.
102. Hein in Bietak, Hein et al. 1994, 244-6, nos. 310-17.
103. Hein in Bietak, Hein et al. 1994, 258-9, nos. 353-4.
104. The Aegean ceramic remains have been kindly identified by my colleague Stephan Hillier of the University of Salzburg. I am also indebted to Vronwy Hankey for consultation about the rhyta.
105. Hein in Bietak, Hein et al. 1994, 261, no. 358; cf. Barber 1987, 153, fig. 111 (I owe this reference to Josef Meron, Heidelberg).
106. Jánosi in Bietak, Dorner, Hein and Jánosi 1994, 32-5, pls. 8-9.
107. Jánosi in Bietak, Dorner, Hein and Jánosi 1994, pls. 5b-6a.
108. Hein in Bietak, Hein et al. 1994, 248, no. 323.
109. Bietak 1992; Bietak in Bietak, Dorner, Hein and Jánosi 1994, 44-58, pls. 14-22; Bietak 1995, 23-6, pls. 1-4; Morgan 1995; Warren 1995, 3-5. I would like to thank Ellen Davis, Sinclair Hood, Nannó Marinatos, Lyvia Morgan, Maria Shaw and other colleagues from whose advice and scholarly judgement on the Tell el-Dab'a frescoes we have benefited during the early stages of assessment. Nannó Marinatos, who has joined our excavation team, has also contributed valuable comments on the following pages. I am also especially indebted to our restorer, Rudolfine Seeber, who has conserved the frescoes, and to my colleagues Josef Dorner and Peter Jánosi, whose vigilance on the site led to their discovery and salvage. To Lyla Pinch-Brock we owe thanks for the beautiful drawings of the paintings.
110. Convenient summary in Hallager 1985; Immerwahr 1990, 193, 199, 204; Press 1967, 101, fig. 44, 103, fig. 45, 214 and fig. 92. For function see Hägg 1987.
111. Evans 1921, fig. 256.
112. M. Shaw, pers. comm.
113. Marinatos 1984a; 1989.
114. Doumas 1992, 130, figs. 109 and 112.
115. Davis 1973.

116. For preliminary discussion of the bull-leaping and bull-grappling scenes from Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup>/Ezbet Helmi see Bietak 1995, 23-4, and Morgan 1995, 40-44; for a full treatment, see Bietak in Bietak, Marinatos and Morgan, forthcoming.
117. Evans 1935, figs. 443-4. For the interpretation see Marinatos 1984a, 1988, 1989. A further article on this subject by Nannó Marinatos is in preparation. See also the following note.
118. I owe this parallel to Nannó Marinatos, pers. comm. See Marinatos 1988, 138, and in preparation.
119. Marinatos in Bietak, Hein et al. 1994, 202, no. 126, and 205, no. 230; Bietak in Bietak, Dorner, Hein and Jánosi 1994, 50-1, pl. 19A.
120. Bietak in Bietak, Dorner, Hein and Jánosi 1994, 49, pl. 17A; Bietak in Bietak, Hein et al. 1994, 195, no. 219.
121. Marinatos in Bietak, Hein et al. 1984, 203, no. 227, with colour plate.
122. Bietak in Bietak, Hein et al. 1994, 52, fig. 39; cf. Immerwahr 1990, 22, fig. 6b.
123. Bietak 1995, 26; Morgan 1995. All the experts who have studied the originals at Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup> - Ellen Davis, Nannó Marinatos, Lyvia Morgan and Stephan Hillier - are unanimous on this point.
124. I owe this observation to restorer Iakovos Michailidis of the Hellenic Antiquities Service, who worked for over twenty-five years at Thera and joined our team in 1995.
125. Davis 1986. This similarity may have chronological significance. The detail was also probably known on Crete at this time.
126. Cf. Doumas 1992, figs. 122 and 128.
127. For Tell el-Dab<sup>a</sup>, see Hein in Bietak, Dorner, Hein and Jánosi 1994, 42, fig. 12d, pl. 13b; Hein in Bietak, Hein et al. 1994, 258, no. 352; for Thera, see Niemeier 1980, 72-4, fig. 44.
128. Bietak 1991a, 310-2; Hein in Bietak, Hein et al. 1994, 217, no. 248; Maguire 1992 and 1995.
129. Literature cited in Manning 1990, Betancourt 1990 and Niemeier 1991. See, however, Warren 1987; Warren and Hankey 1989, 140-1.
130. Bietak 1992, 28; Jánosi in Bietak, Dorner, Hein and Jánosi 1994, 35, pl. 10b.
131. <sup>a</sup>Abd el-Maksoud, pers. comm. For Tell el-Hebwa, see <sup>a</sup>Abd el-Maksoud 1987.
132. Niemeier 1991, 195-200.
133. This foreign god of art is also known in Egypt in the New Kingdom; see Stadelmann 1967, 124.
134. Hood 1978, 48-77; Marinatos 1984b; Morgan 1988, 143-65.
135. Marinatos 1994.
136. Bietak 1992, 28; Hankey 1993; Bietak 1995, 26, with n. 51.
137. Reusch 1958; Marinatos 1993, 151-5, figs. 122, 128-31 and 134; Marinatos 1995.
138. Cairo, CG 52654; literature in Saleh and Sourouzian 1986, no. 121.

139. Cairo, CG 52658, 52659; literature in Saleh and Sourouzian 1986, no. 122. The weapons were found together with other precious objects of kings Ahmose and Kamose in the coffin of Queen Ahhotep I, perhaps the wife of King Senachtenre<sup>c</sup> of the 17th Dynasty. As the objects do not bear the names of Ahhotep, it is perfectly possible that the priests who hid the half-plundered royal burials from tomb robbers had placed objects from the burials of Ahmose and Kamose into this coffin.
140. Lacau 1909, 3f; recently, Jánosi 1991/92, 99-101, and Hankey 1993.
141. Gauthier 1927, 12; Gardiner 1947, 206f. The German historian Eduard Meyer (1928, 54,7), translating this toponym as Crete, took the title of Queen Ahhotep to mean that during a regency for her sons Kamose and Ahmose she had formed special ties with the Minoans, with whose help the Hyksos were finally overthrown. He explained the title as arising from a marriage of the widowed Egyptian queen to the Minoan king. This is stretching the evidence too far, of course, but it is interesting to note this suggestion of a dynastic link made already many decades before the discovery of Minoan frescoes at Avaris.
142. Vercoutter 1947; Vandersleyen 1971, 168-74.
143. Vandersleyen 1967, 123-59; 1968, 127-34.
144. Franke 1988, 264.
145. Tillmann in Bietak, Hein et al. 1994, 255-7, no. 344-9.
146. Bourriau 1991.
147. Schwab in Bietak, Hein et al. 1994, 256, no. 347.
148. Habachi, pers. comm. 1978.
149. Stadelmann 1967, 146-8; Helck 1971, 446-73.
150. Pusch 1993.
151. See Yoyotte 1971-2, 172; Bietak 1975, 30.

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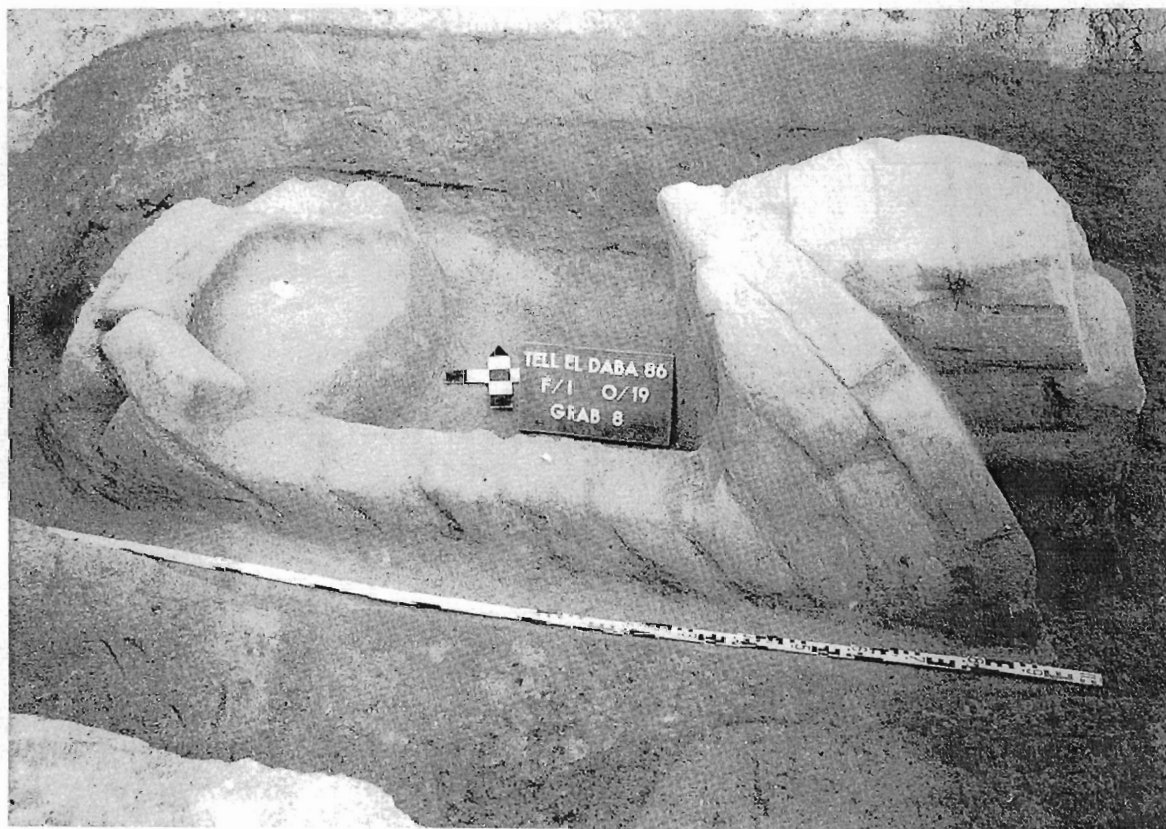
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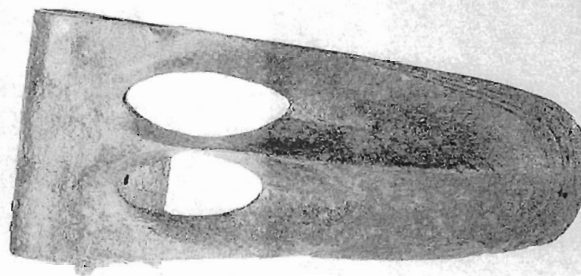
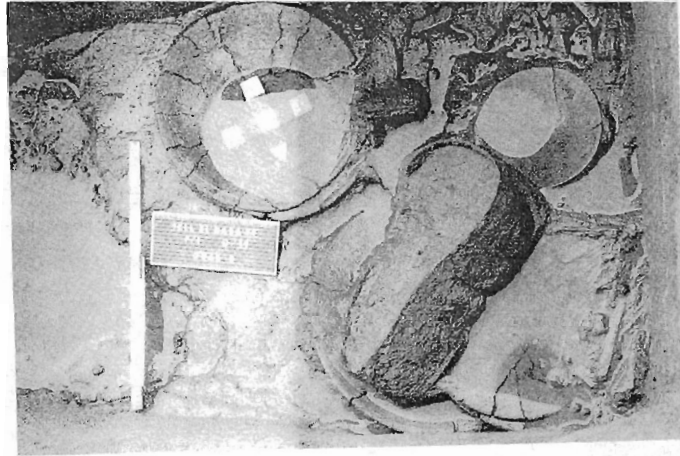




**1A** Part of settlement of the early 12th Dynasty in area F/I-i/20, with houses and narrow streets arranged in a regular grid layout (strata e/3-2)



**1B** Tomb F/I-o/19-no 8 of a warrior, late 12th Dynasty (stratum d/2 = H).



2A Tomb F/I- $\sigma$ /19-no. 8; burial equipment *in situ* including a bronze belt.

2B Duck-bill axe from the same tomb (reg. no. 6139).



2C-D Tomb F/I- $\sigma$ /20-no. 17 of a warrior (C) buried with a dagger (D), late 12th Dynasty (stratum D/2 = H).

6141



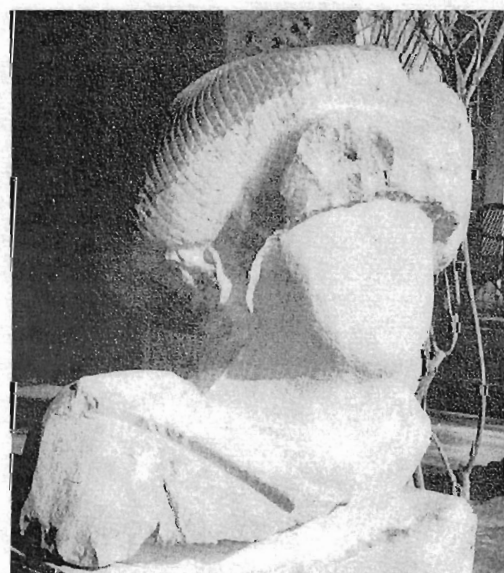
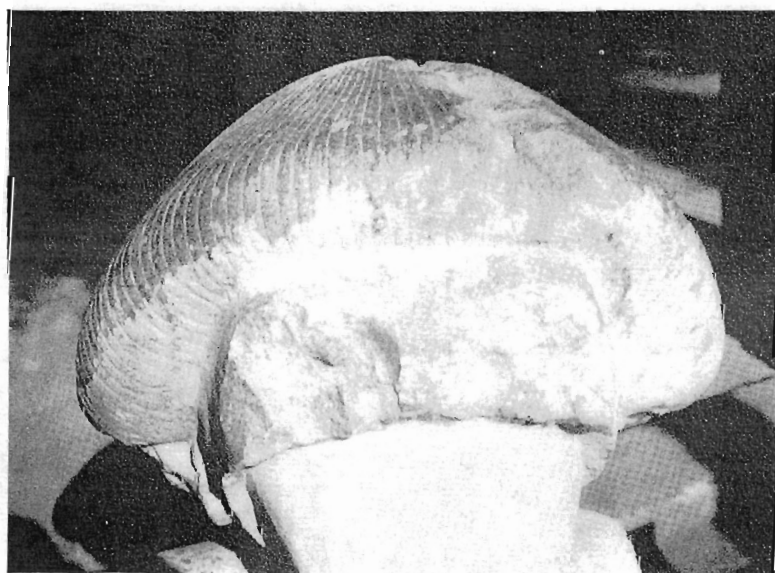
3A-B Chamber with cupola of tomb F/I-p/19-no. 1 (strata d/2-1) belonging to a high official of Asiatic origin. Probably late 12th Dynasty.





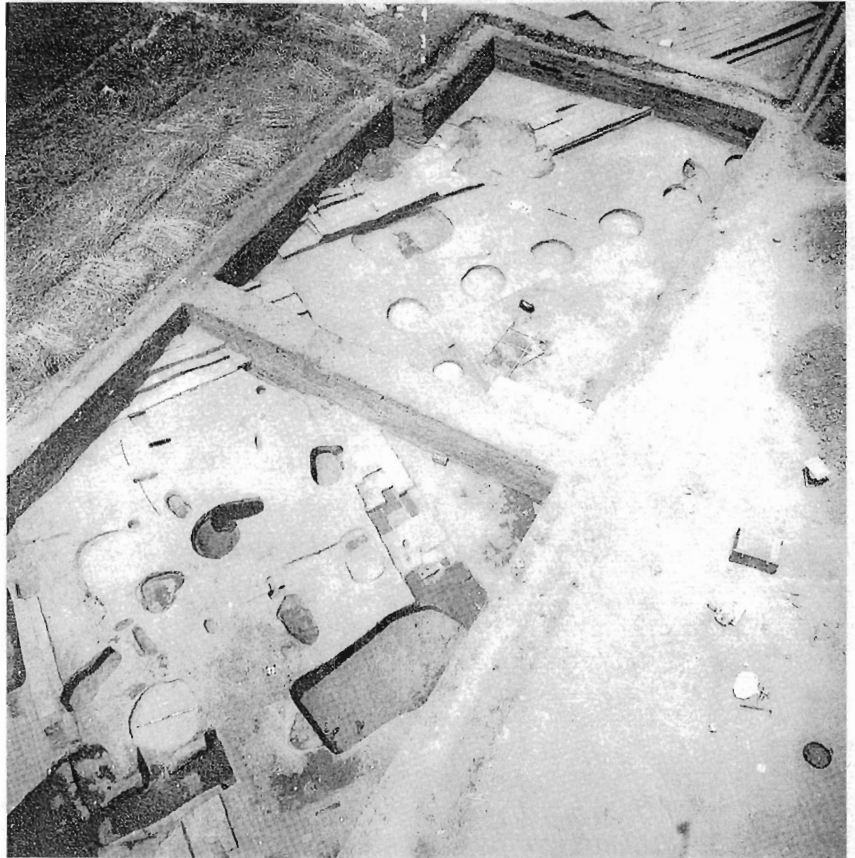


4A Tomb F/1-p/19-no. 1, chapel and robber's pit with fragments of colossal statue *in situ*.

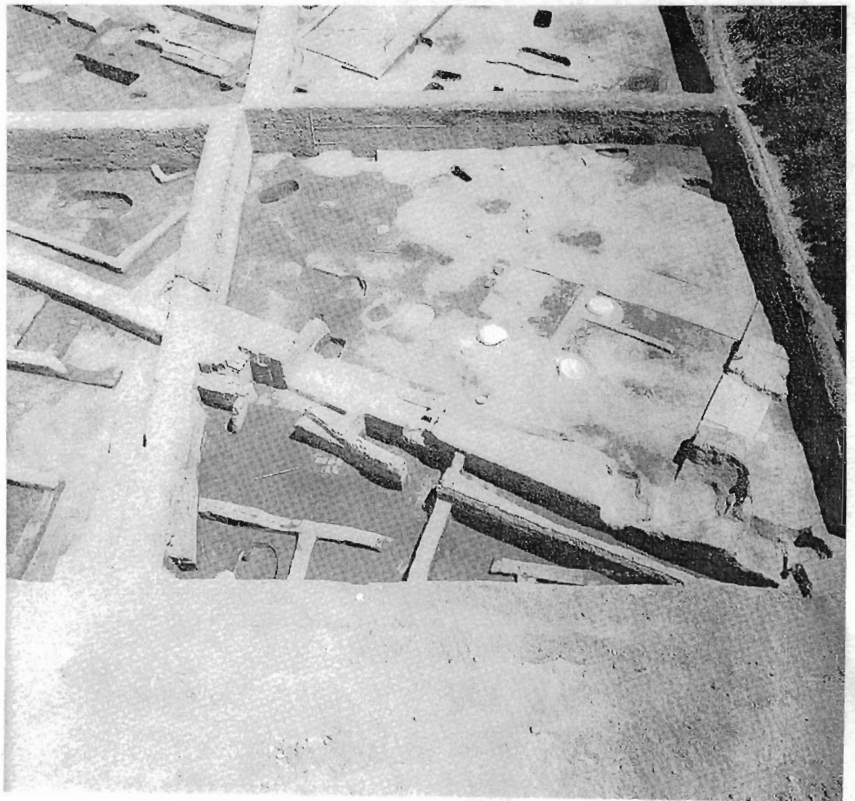


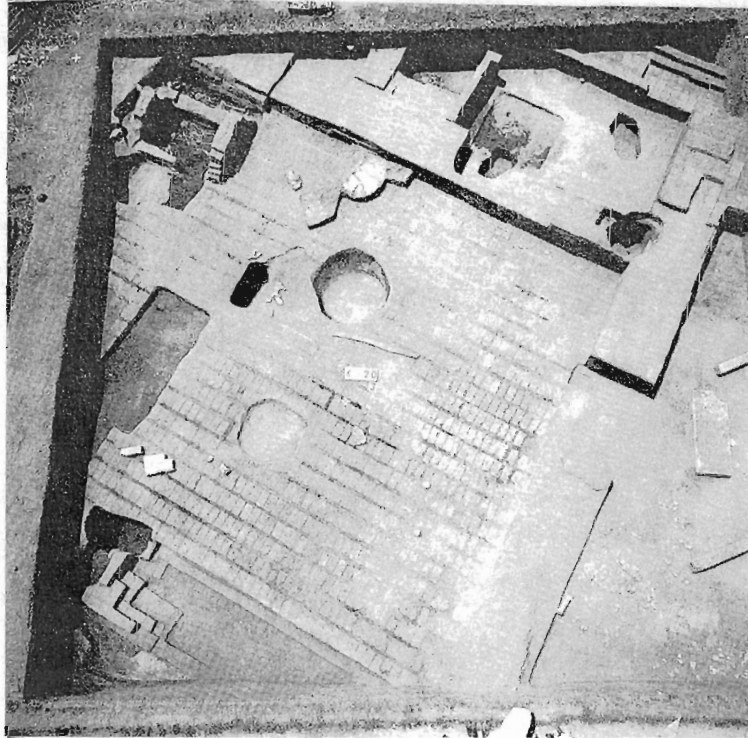
4B-C Fragments of colossal statue of an Asiatic dignitary

5A The excavated part of the palace of the early 13th Dynasty, looking south (stratum d/G/4). To the right is the courtyard with empty foundation pits, which once held columns. To the left in the foreground is the secondary entrance hall to the palace, also with empty column-pits.

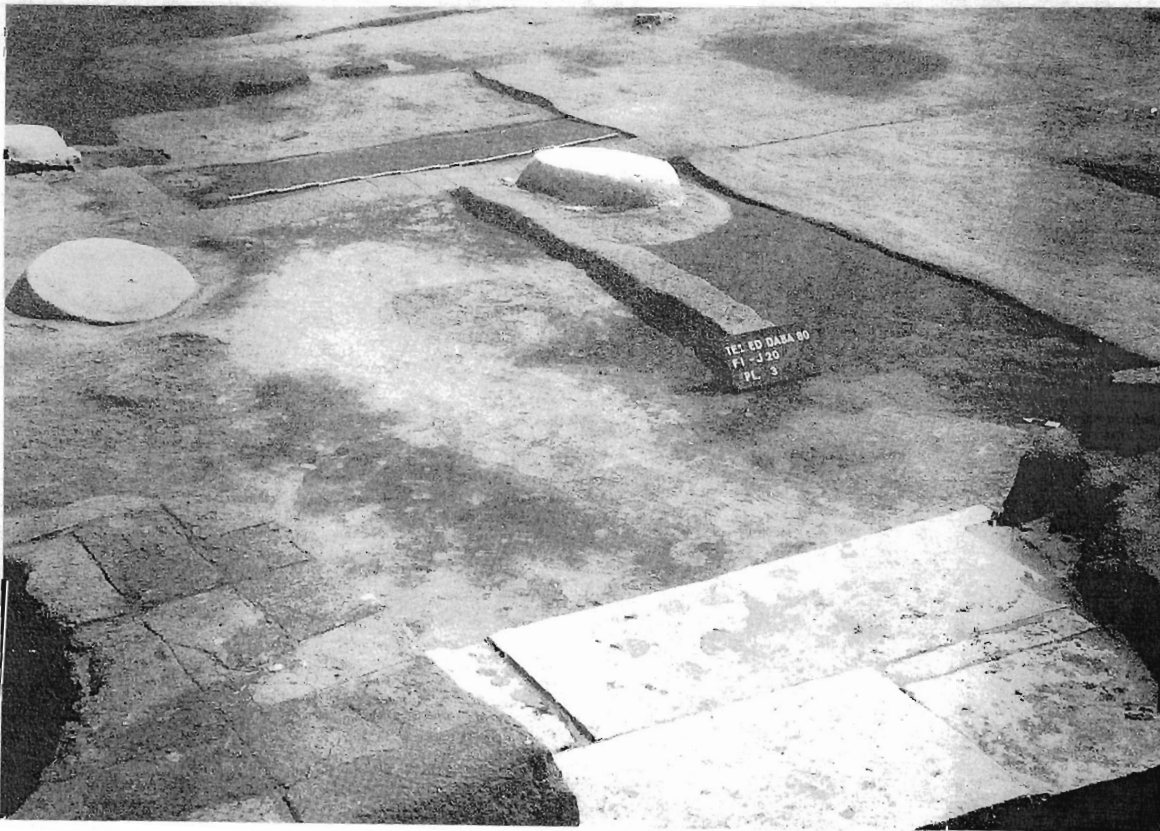


5B Courtyard of the palace of the early 13th Dynasty, looking east.



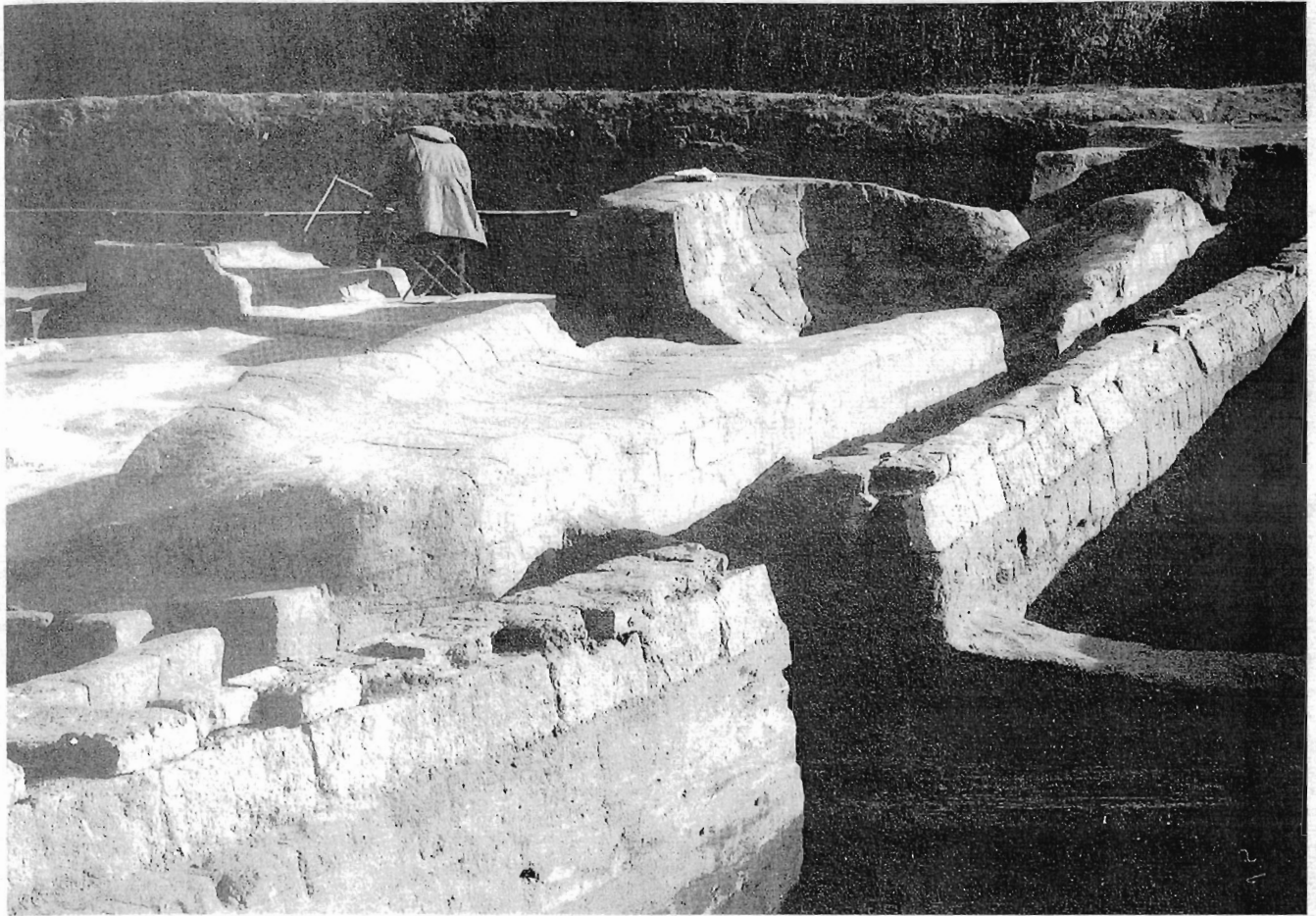


6A Paved reception hall of the palace of the early 13th Dynasty with empty column-pits. White-washed plaster is still preserved on the floor



6B Threshold of the reception hall with courtyard in the background

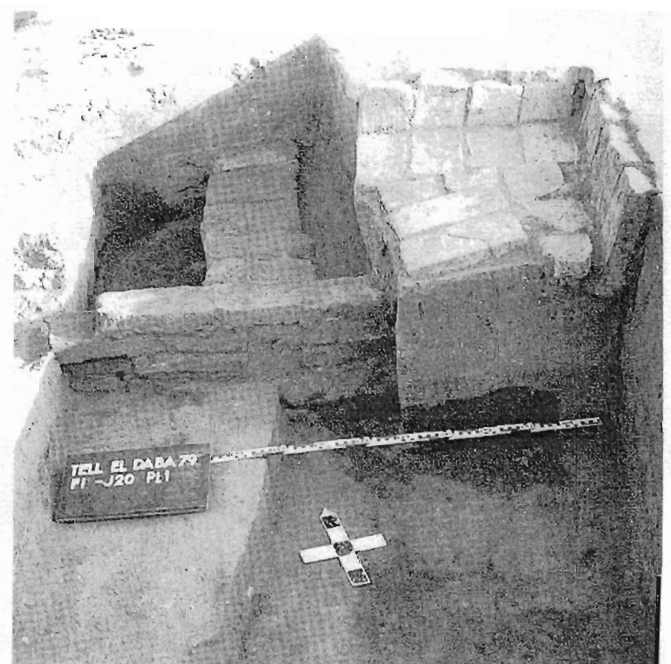




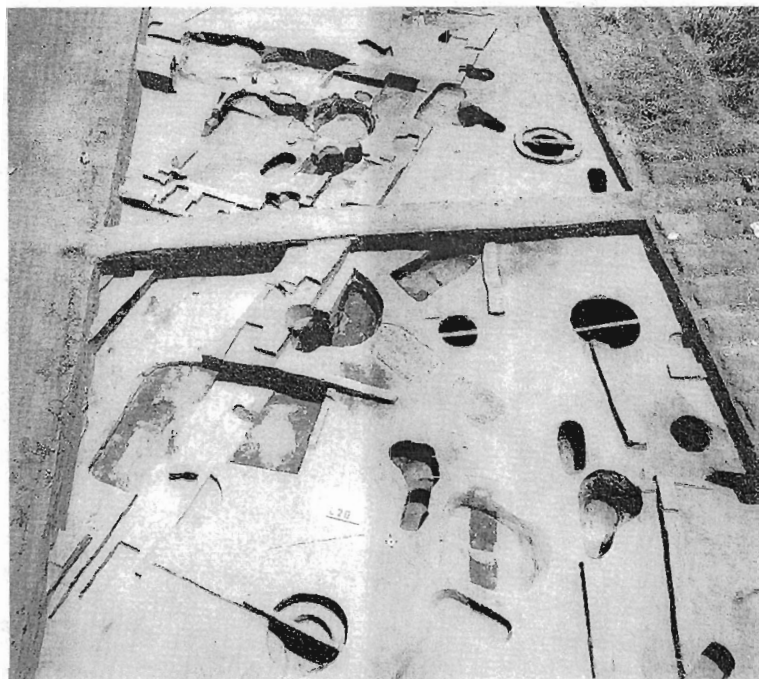
7A View of the water drainage system of the palace of the early 13th Dynasty



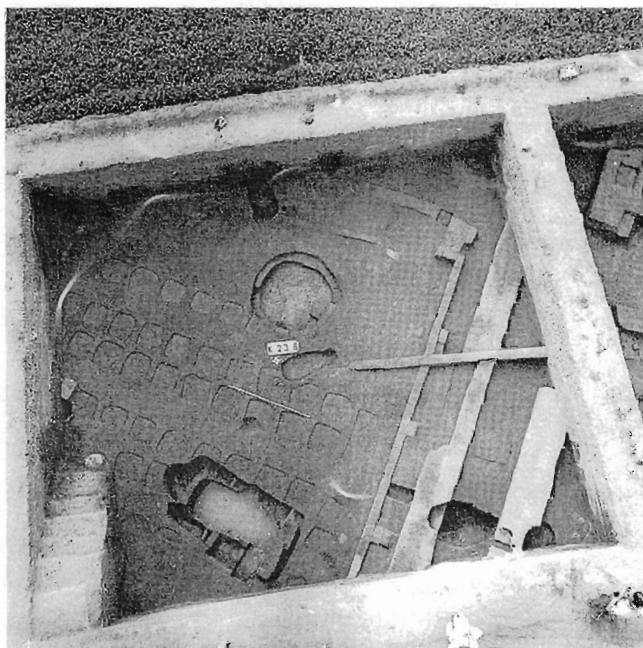
7B Section through the palace drainage system, which



7C Basin above the drainage system



8A South wall of the palace of the 13th Dynasty (area F/I-l/20, stratum d/1) with adjoining garden, looking east. In the garden, round tree-pits partly encased by circular brick walls are visible.



8B Garden with flower beds to the east of the 13th Dynasty palace (area F/I-k/12, stratum d/1).

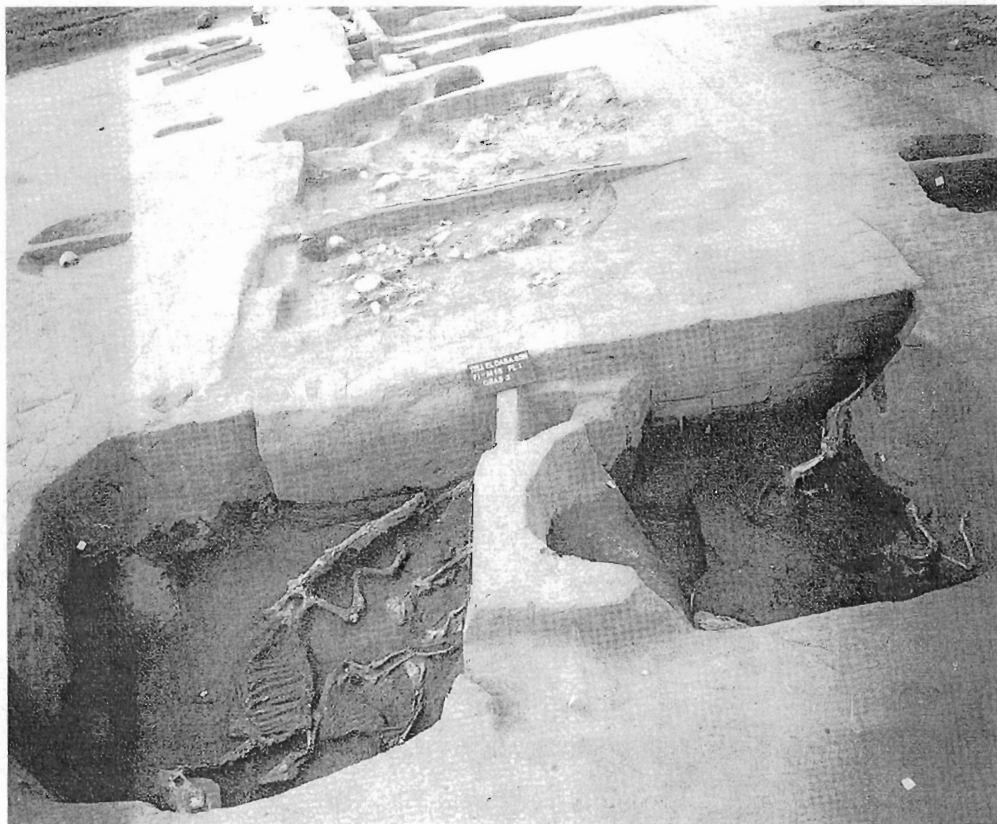


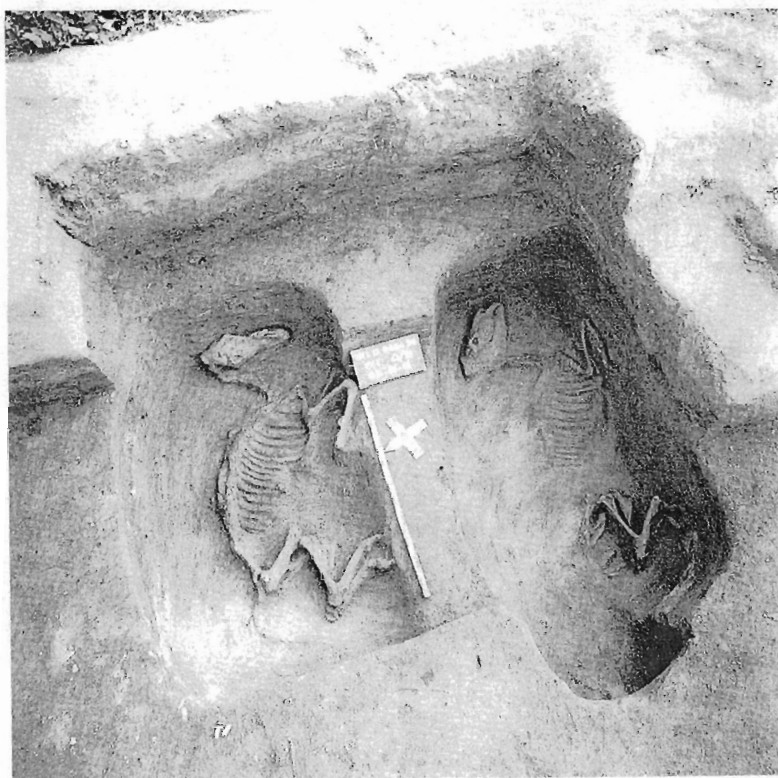
8C Gardens with flower beds and tree-pits framed within ancient irrigation ditches, to the south of the 13th Dynasty palace (area F/I-l-m/20, stratum d/1).





9A Tombs of officials of the late 12th/early 13th Dynasties in area F/I-n/18-nps. 2-6 (strata d/2-1=H-C/4).

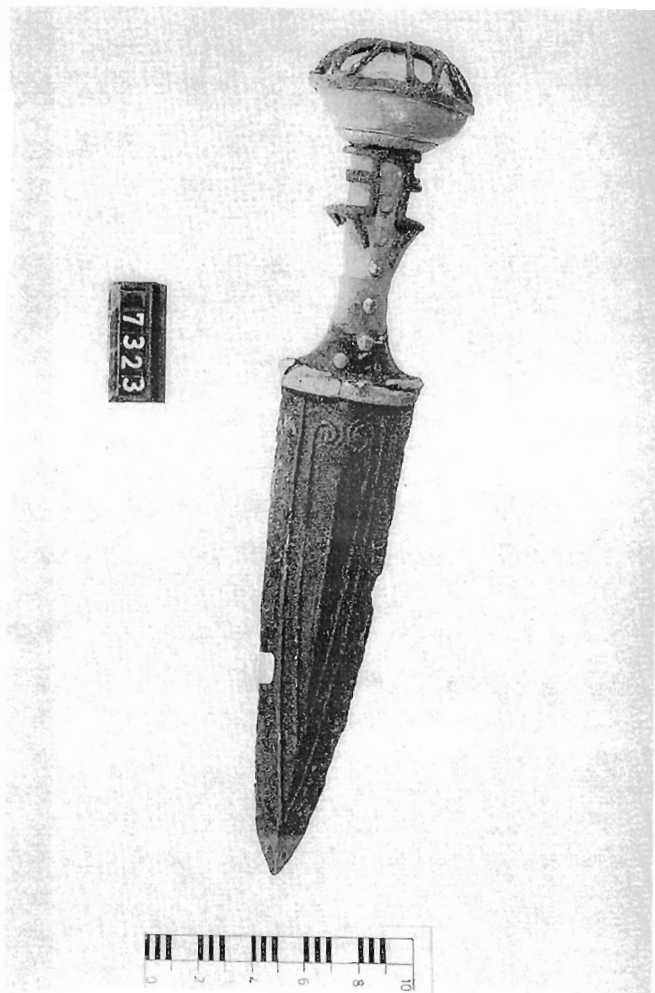




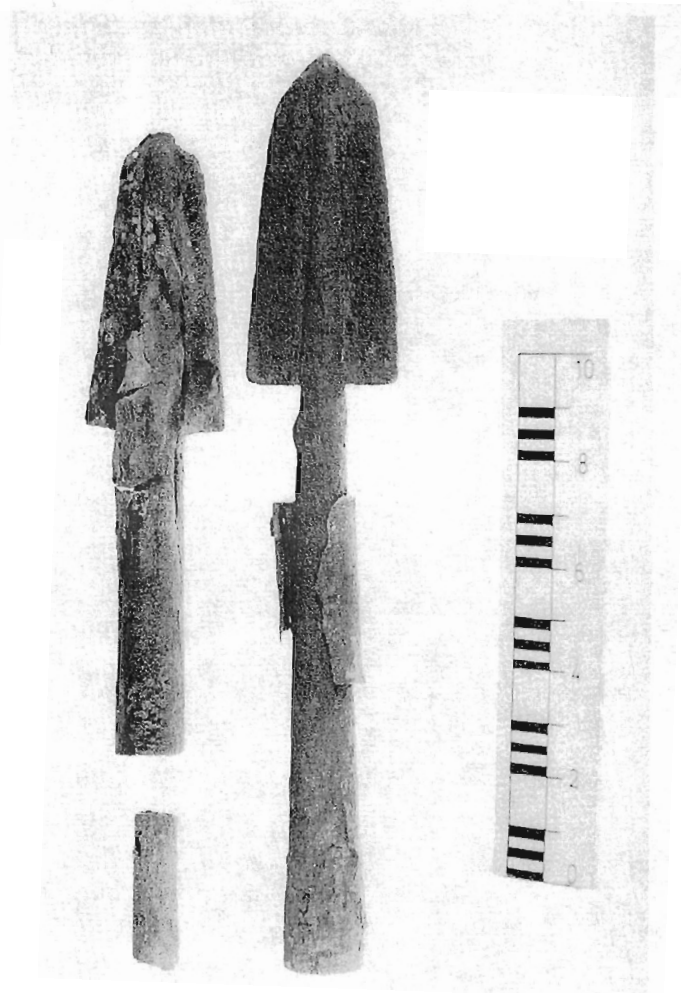
**10A** Donkey burials in two separate pits placed in front of the entrance to the palace tomb F/I-o/21-no. 11



**10B** Burials of donkeys, sheep and goats in front of the palace tomb F/I-m/19-no. 22.



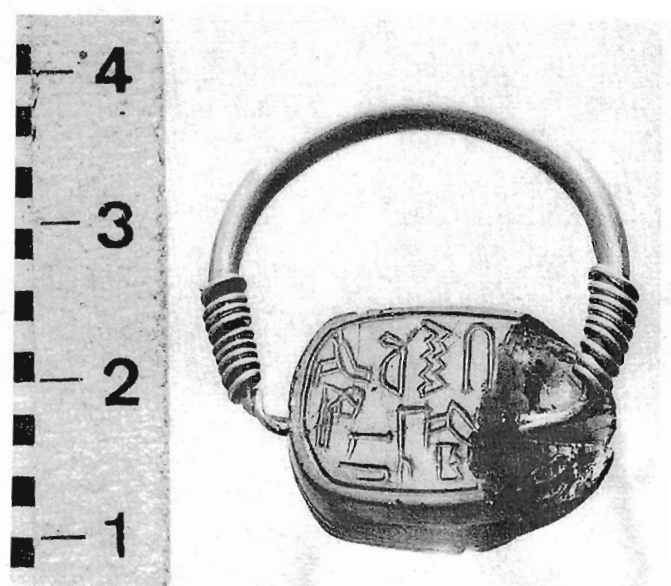
11A Bronze dagger, hilt restored, with ornamental pommel from palace tomb F/I-m/18-no. 3 (stratum d/1).



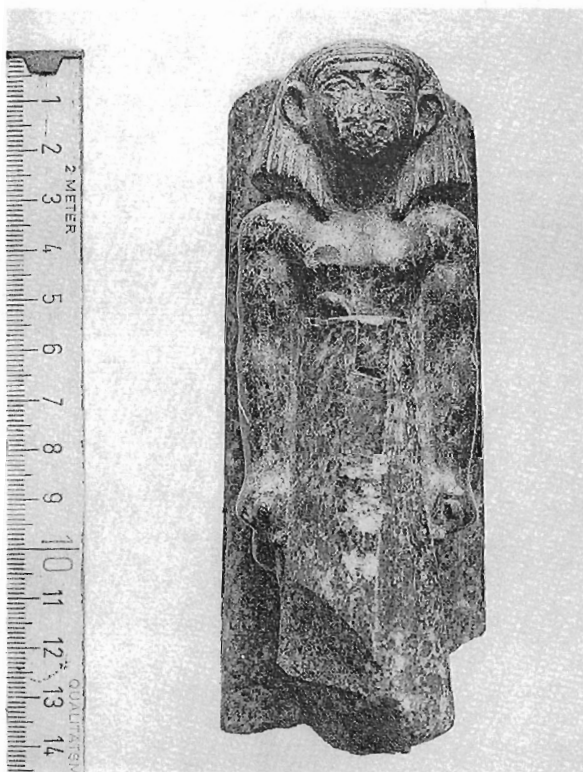
11B Two javelin heads of silver from the same tomb.



11C Bracelet of gold and semi-precious stones.



11D Gold ring with a large stone set in a bezel.



12A ABOVE Serpentine statuette of an anonymous official from palace tomb F/I-1/19-no. 1.



12B TOP RIGHT Seal-impression of Aya from palace tomb F/I-m/18-no. 2.

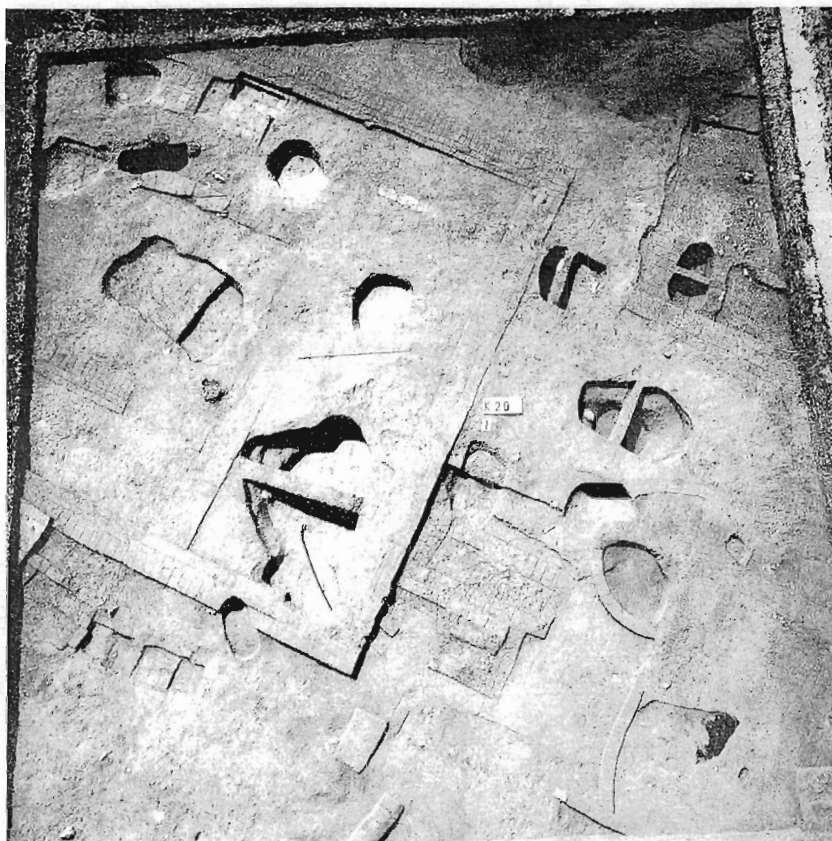


12C RIGHT Haematite cylinder seal with a representation of the north Syrian weather god, from area F/I-d/23, palace of the early 13th Dynasty. Length 1.85 cm; Diam. 1.1 cm.

12D BELOW Impression from C.







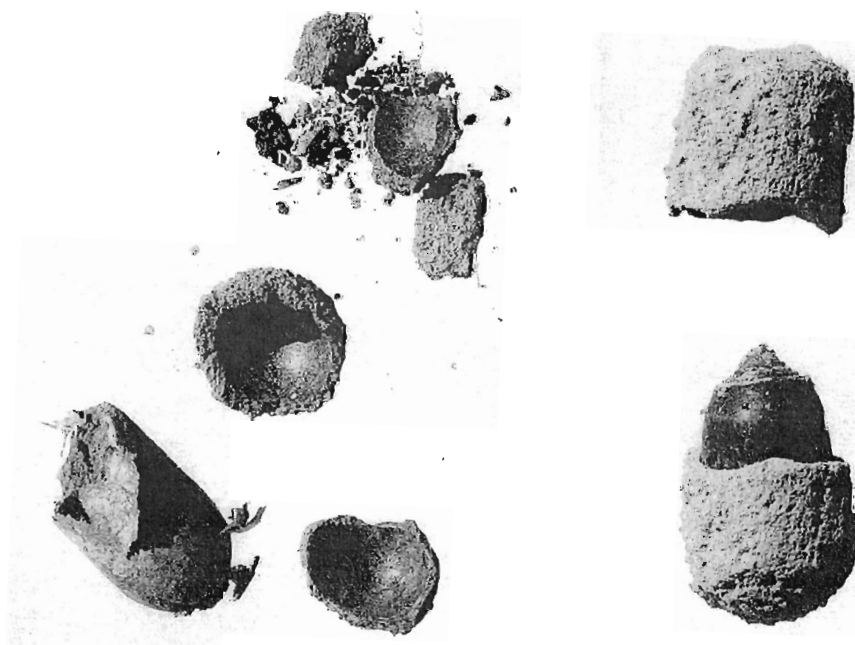
**13A** Remains of a house with a vestibule and central hall flanked by two bedrooms; the area is disturbed by pits and tombs. Excavation area F/I-k/20 (stratum c = 13th Dynasty).



**13B** Temple III, looking east in area A/II o-r/16-18 (strata F-E/2 = time between King Necho and the beginning of the Persian period).



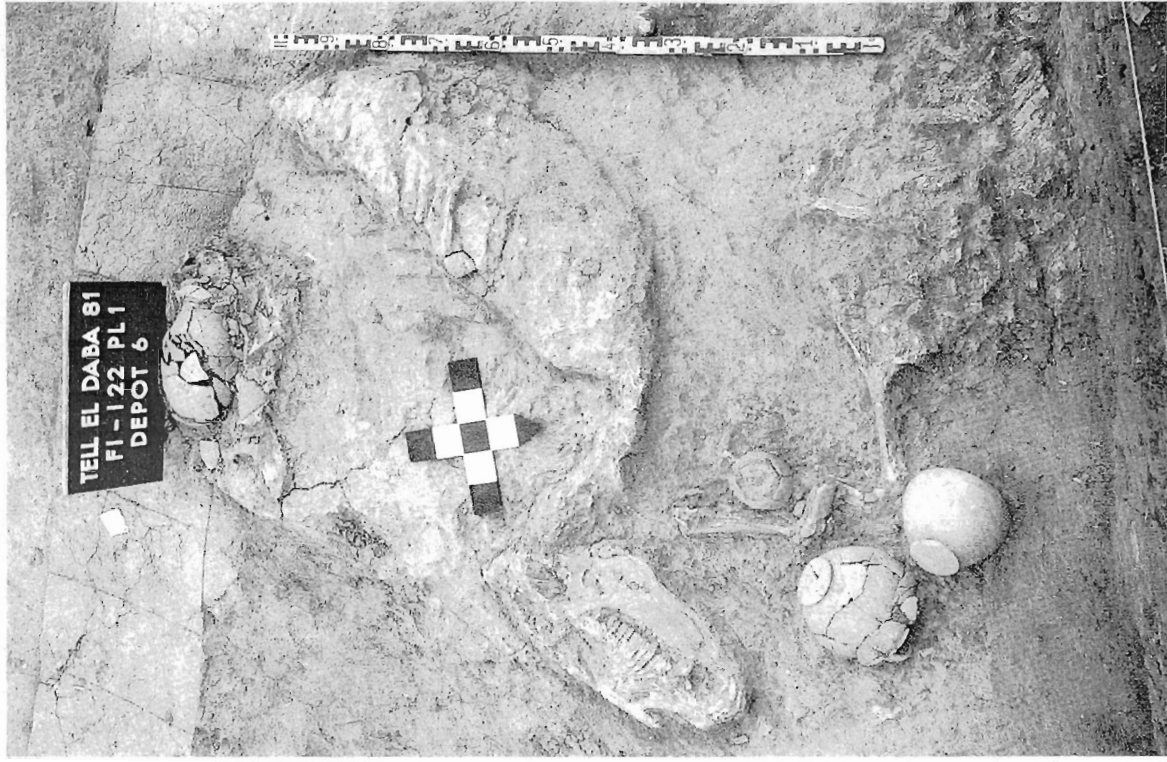
14A Altar in front of Temple III with different phases in sand and mud-bricks (strata F-F/2).



14B-C Acorns from the altar of Temple III.



**15A** Sacrificed donkeys in an offering pit in area A/II-1/14 within the sacred precinct (stratum F or G).

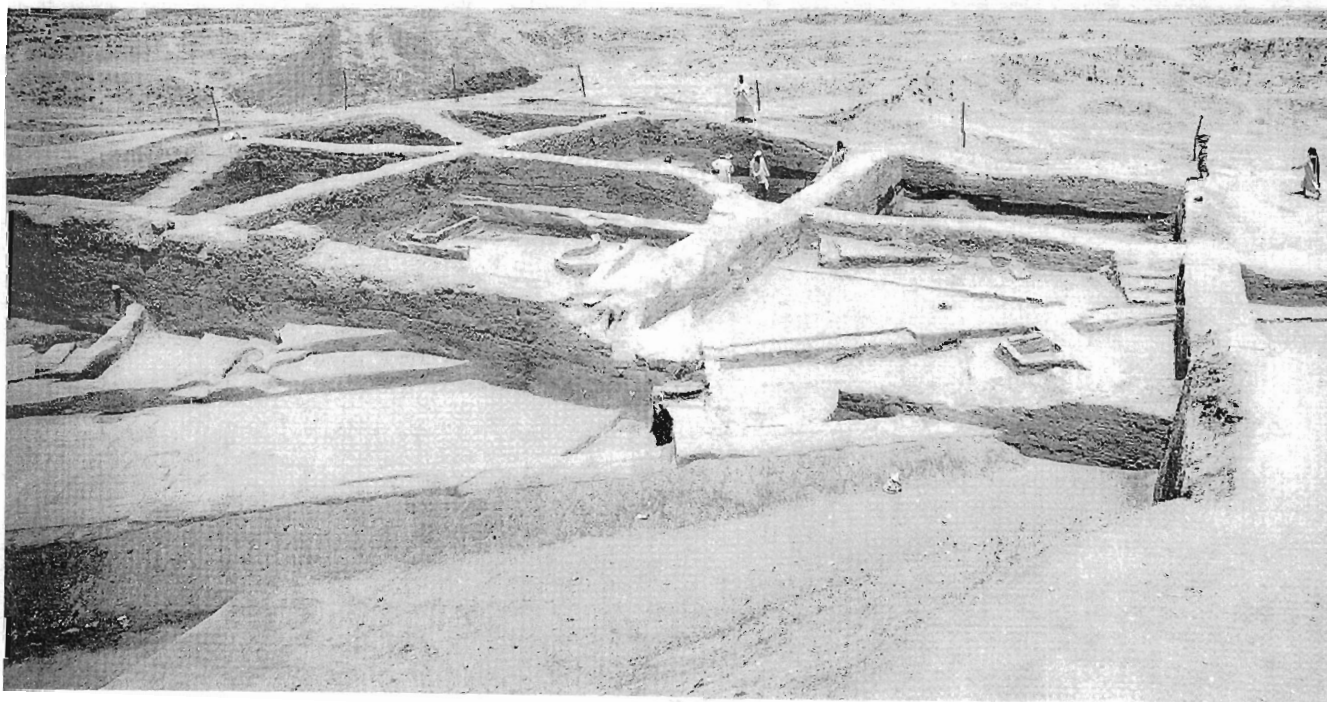


**15B** Sacrificed donkeys in a pit in front of the temple in area FI-i/22. In the foreground are two jugs placed as offerings (stratum a/2 = Hyksos Period).



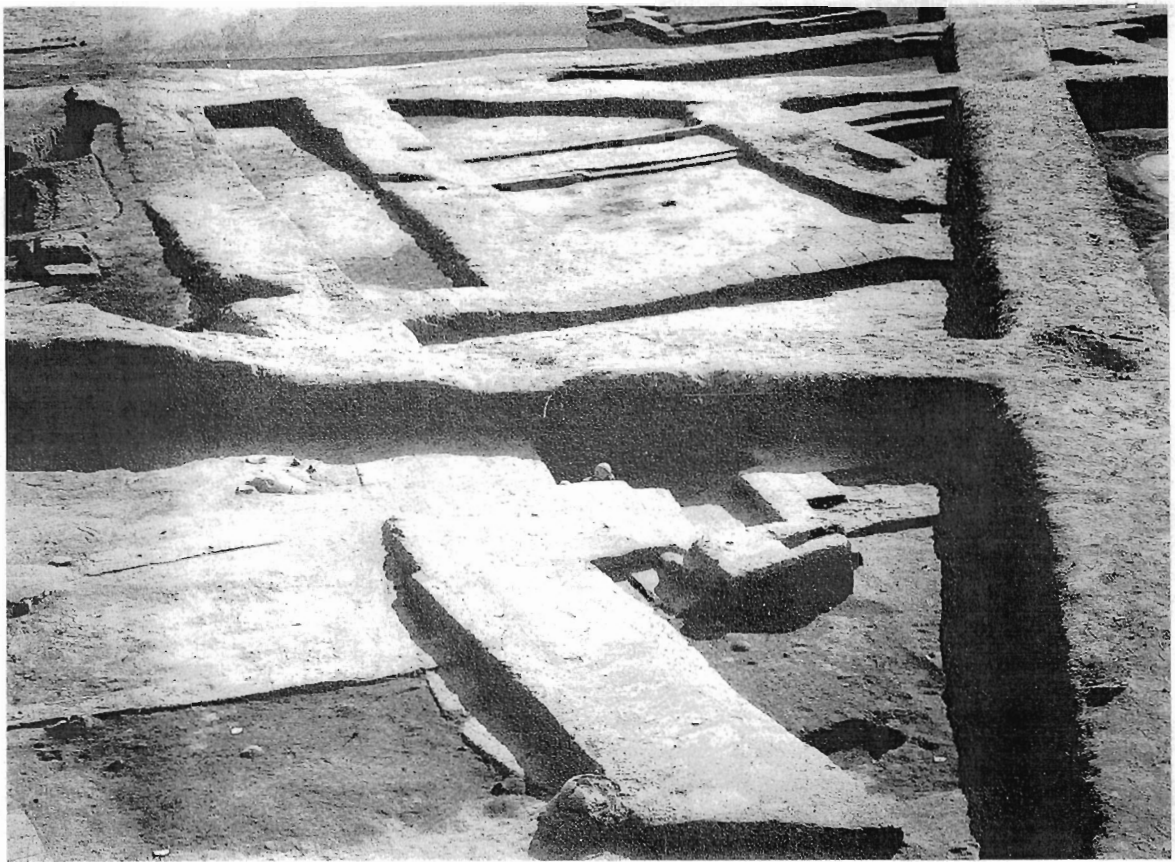


**16A** Middle Bronze Age 'Brenthaus'-type Temple II within the sacred compound in area A/II, looking north (stratum E/3).



**16B** Temple II, looking east. The major hall with two entrances is visible in the foreground to the left and a sanctuary can be seen to the right (strata E/3-2).





**17A-B** Late phase of the Egyptian-style Temple V within the sacred precinct in area A/II-o-p/19-21, looking south (strata E/1-D/2 : Hyksos Period).

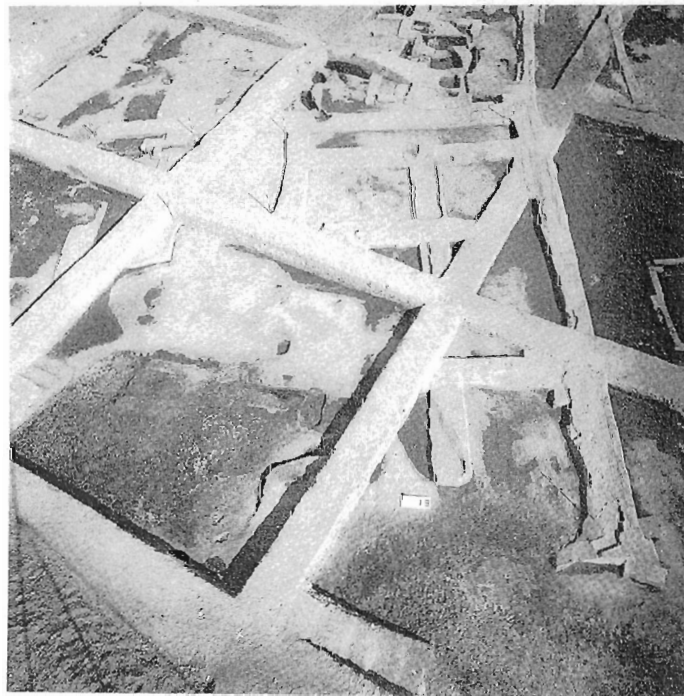
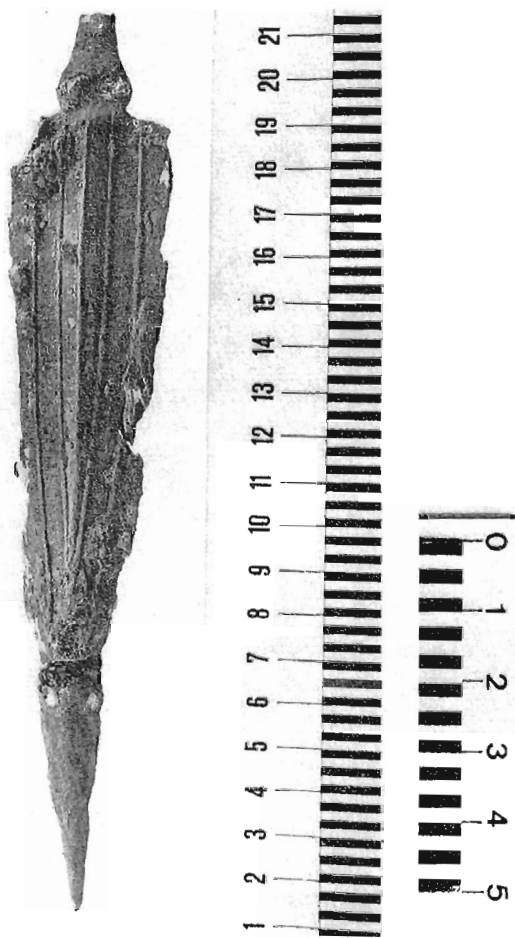
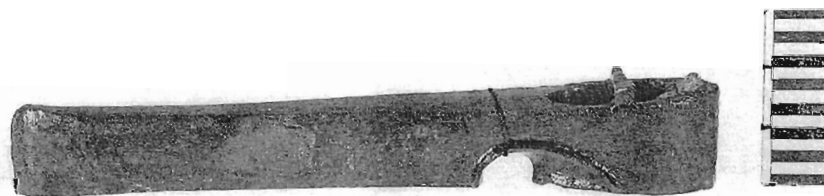


Plate 18

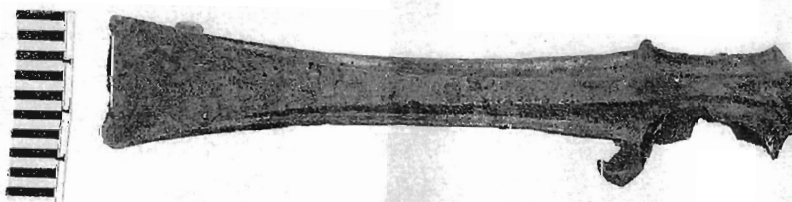


**18A** Middle Bronze Age IIA dagger from tomb A/II-m/10-no. 8 (stratum F) (reg. no. 1756).

**18B** MB IIA socketed javelin head from tomb F/I-I/20-no. 20 (stratum b/3) (reg. no. 4796).



**18C** Late MB IIA axe-head from tomb F/I-o/17-no. 1 (stratum d/1) (reg. no. 7329).



**18D** MB IIB axe-head from tomb A/II-I/14-no. 5 (stratum E/1 = early Hyksos Period) (reg. no. 1377).



19A Intact vault of tomb A/II-M/17-no. 16 (c. strata E/2 = beginning of the Hyksos Period)

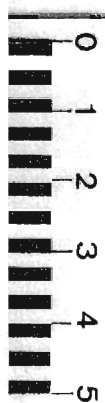
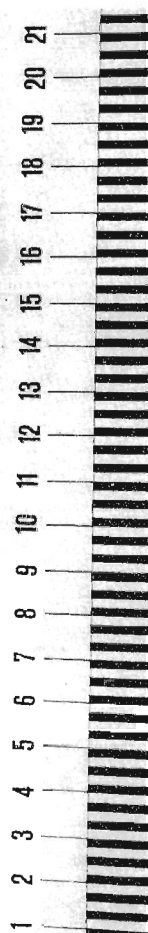


19B Burial in tomb A/II-M/17-no. 16, with body in flexed position and coffin (see also 19A)



19C Infant burial F/II-M/12-no. 28, with juglets

Plate 18

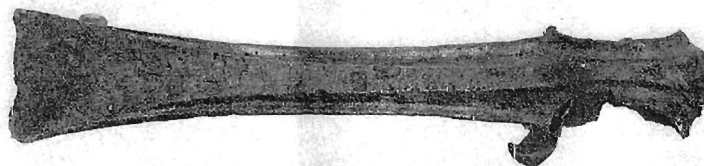


**18A** Middle Bronze Age IIA dagger from tomb A/II-m/10-no. 8 (stratum F) (reg. no. 1756).

**18B** MB IIA socketed javelin head from tomb F/I-I/20-no. 20 (stratum b/3) (reg. no. 4796).

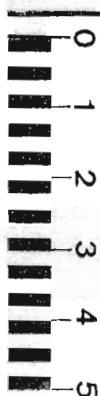
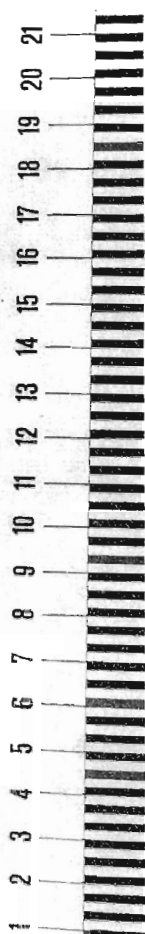


**18C** Late MB IIA axe-head from tomb F/I-o/17-no. 1 (stratum d/1) (reg. no. 7329).



**18D** MB IIB axe-head from tomb A/II-I/I4-no. 5 (stratum E/1 = early Hyksos Period) (reg. no. 1377).





**18A** Middle Bronze Age IIA dagger from tomb A/II-m/10-no. 8 (stratum F) (reg. no. 1756).



**18B** MB IIA socketed javelin head from tomb F/I-I/20-no. 20 (stratum b/3) (reg. no. 4796).



**18C** Late MB IIA axe-head from tomb F/I-o/17-no. 1 (stratum d/1) (reg. no. 7329).



**18D** MB IIB axe-head from tomb A/II-l/14-no. 5 (stratum E/1 = early Hyksos Period) (reg. no. 1377).



**20A** Servant burial in front of the entrance of the chamber of tomb F/I-1/22-no. 28 (stratum b/3 = late 13th or 14th Dynasty)



**20B** Servant burial in front of the entrance of the chamber of tomb A/II-m/16-no. 2 (stratum F = late 13th or 14th Dynasty).



**20A** Servant burial in front of the entrance of the chamber of tomb F/I-l/22-no. 28 (stratum b/3 = late 13th or 14th Dynasty)



**20B** Servant burial in front of the entrance of the chamber of tomb A/II-m/16-no. 2 (stratum F = late 13th or 14th Dynasty)

*Plate 21*

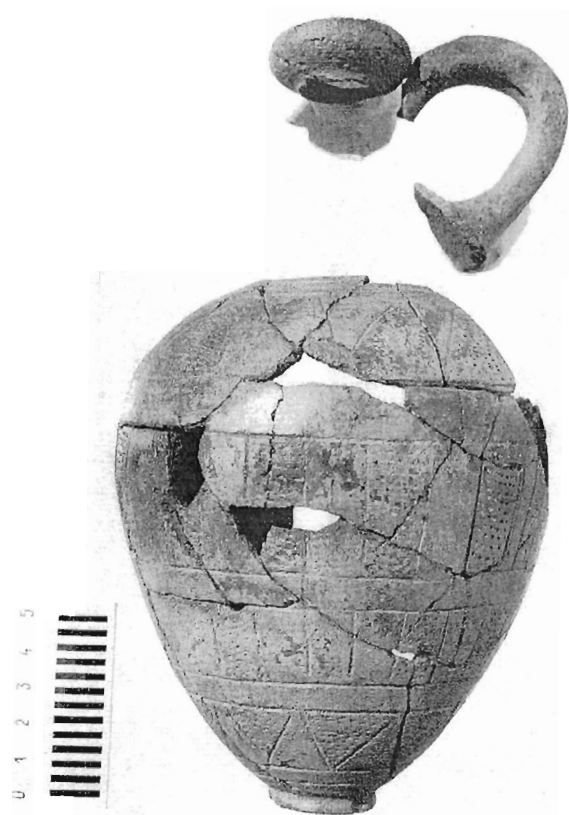
**21A** House compound  
with silos in area  
F/I-i/21-20, looking  
south (stratum b/2).



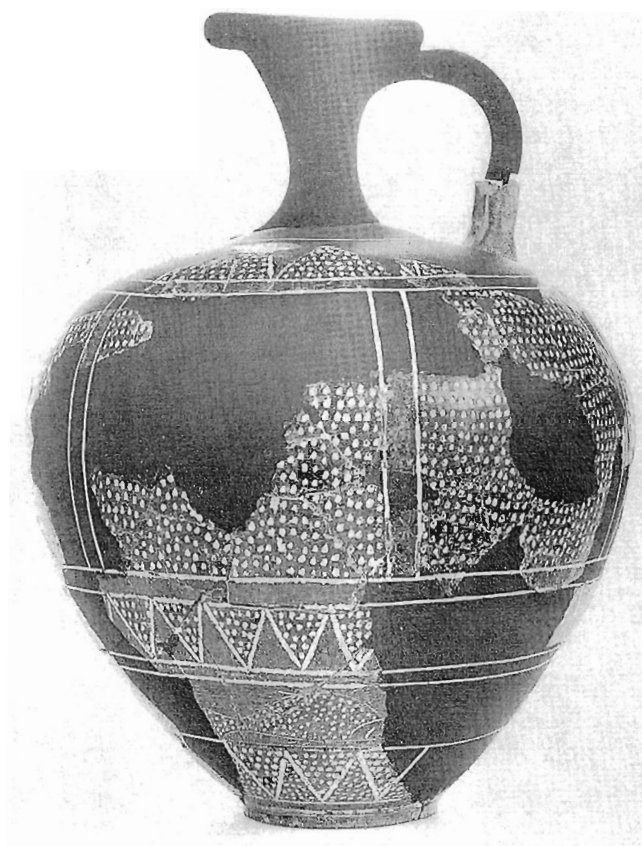
**21B** Compact settlement  
of the late Hyksos  
Period in area A/V  
(stratum D/2).



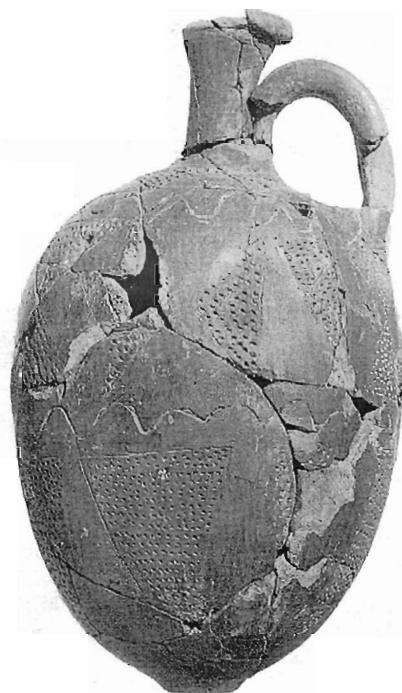
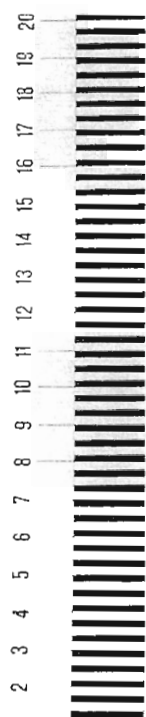




22A Early Tell el-Yahudiya jug of piriform 1a type from tomb F/I-i/21-no. 3 (stratum C = 13th Dynasty) (reg. no. 3283).



22B Large piriform 1a type Tell el-Yahudiya jug with fish design from building 106-109 in area A/II (stratum G = 13th Dynasty) (reg. no. 1734). Height, 30.3 cm.



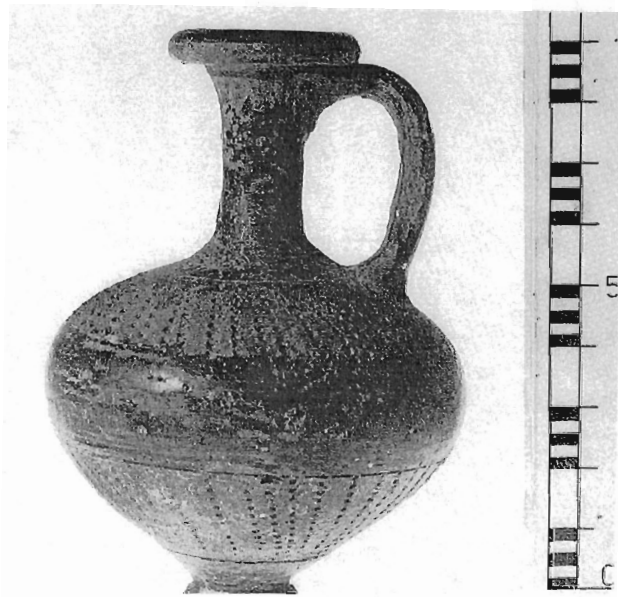
22C-D Piriform 1b type Tell el-Yahudiya jug from tomb A/II-m/16-no. 3 (stratum F = late 13th or 14th Dynasty) (reg. no. 3139).



**23A** Black-polished incised Tell el-Yahudiya juglet of piriform 2a type from tomb A/II-k/14-no. 1 (stratum D/3) (reg. no. 2276).



**23B** Black-polished incised Tell el-Yahudiya juglet of biconical 1 type from tomb A/II-l/14-no. 5 (stratum e/1) (reg. no. 1405).





**24A** Spouted, brown-polished jug with tripartite handle from tomb F/I-k/20-no. 28 (stratum b/3) (reg. no. 4489).



**24B** Spouted, brown-polished jug with bipartite handle from tomb F/I-k/24-no. 48 (stratum b/3) (reg. no. 4627).



**24C** Spouted, brown-polished jug from tomb F/I-k/20-no. 28 (stratum b/3-c) (reg. no. 4495).



**24D** Spouted, brown-polished jug from tomb F/I-k/23-no. 33 (stratum b/3) (reg. no. 4625).

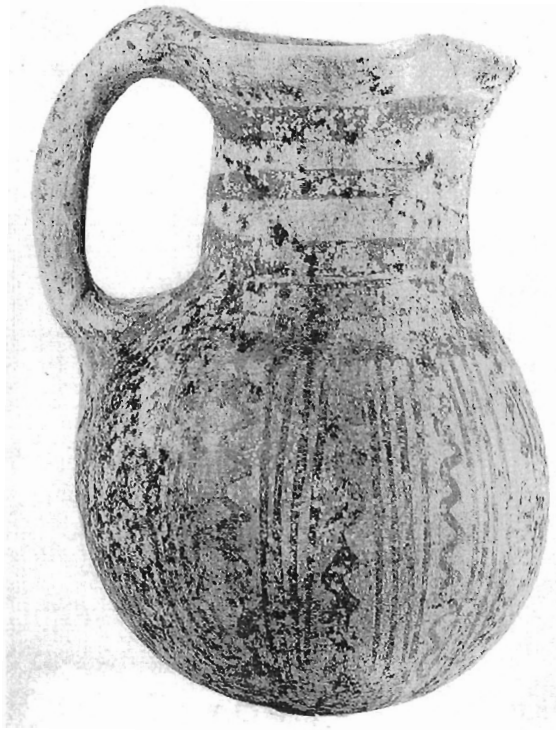


25A Amphora imported from southern Palestine, from tomb F/I-1/20-no. 10 (stratum b/3).

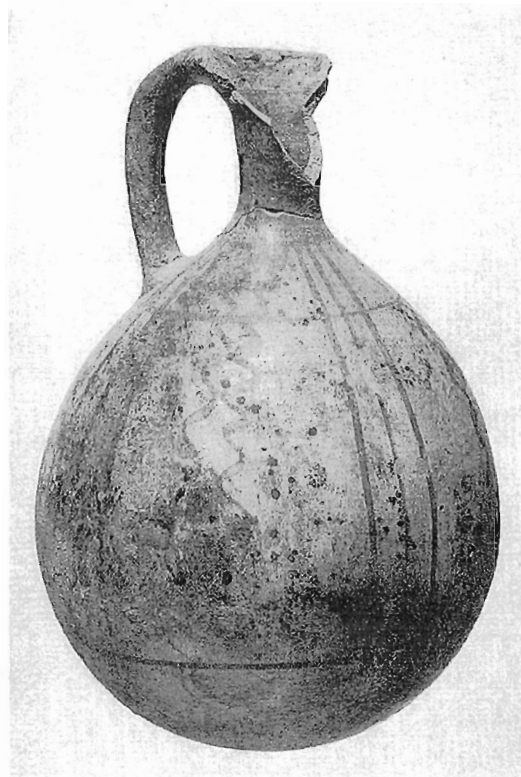
25B Seal-impression, on the handle of the same amphora, of a man named Shimu, a Canaanite prince.







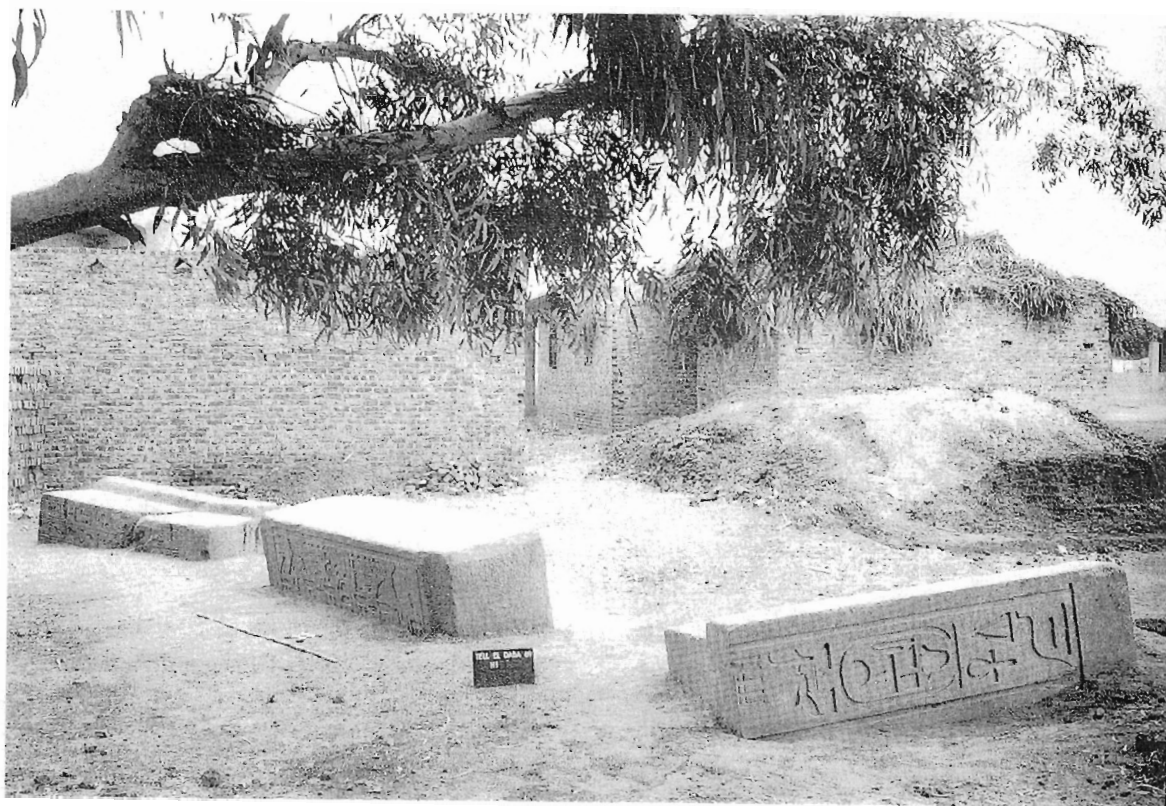
**26A** Middle Cypriote jug of White Painted Pendant Line style from tomb A/I-g/4-no. 1 (stratum E/1) (reg. no. 272).



**26B** Cypriote jug of White Painted Pendant Line style from tomb F/I-1/21-no. 8 (stratum a/2 = D/3-E/1) (reg. no. 3138).

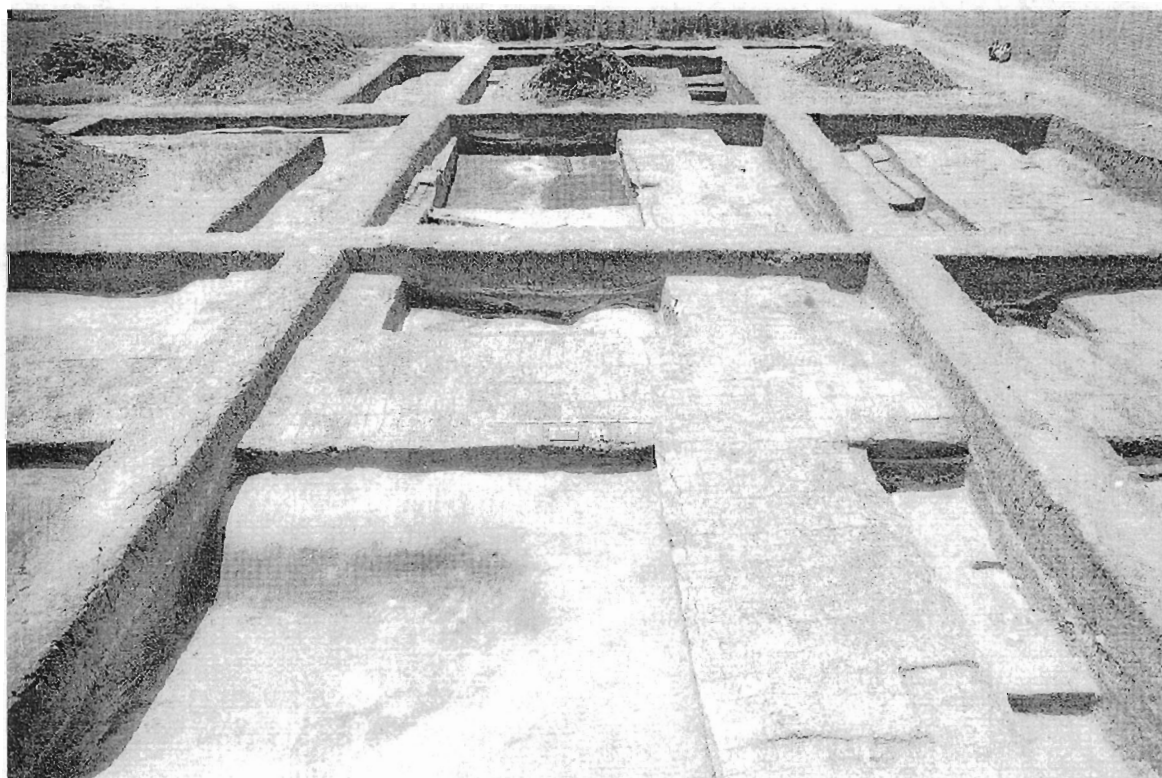


**26C** Fragments of late Cypriote Bichrome ware from A/II-a/21 (stratum C or D/2) (reg. no. 2655).



27A Sections of granite doorway of a palatial hall originally constructed for Amenemhat I of the 12th Dynasty re-used as a door of the platform construction in area H/I





28A-B Foundation of platform H/I near the village of 'Ezbet Helmi looking southwest (A) and northwest (B)



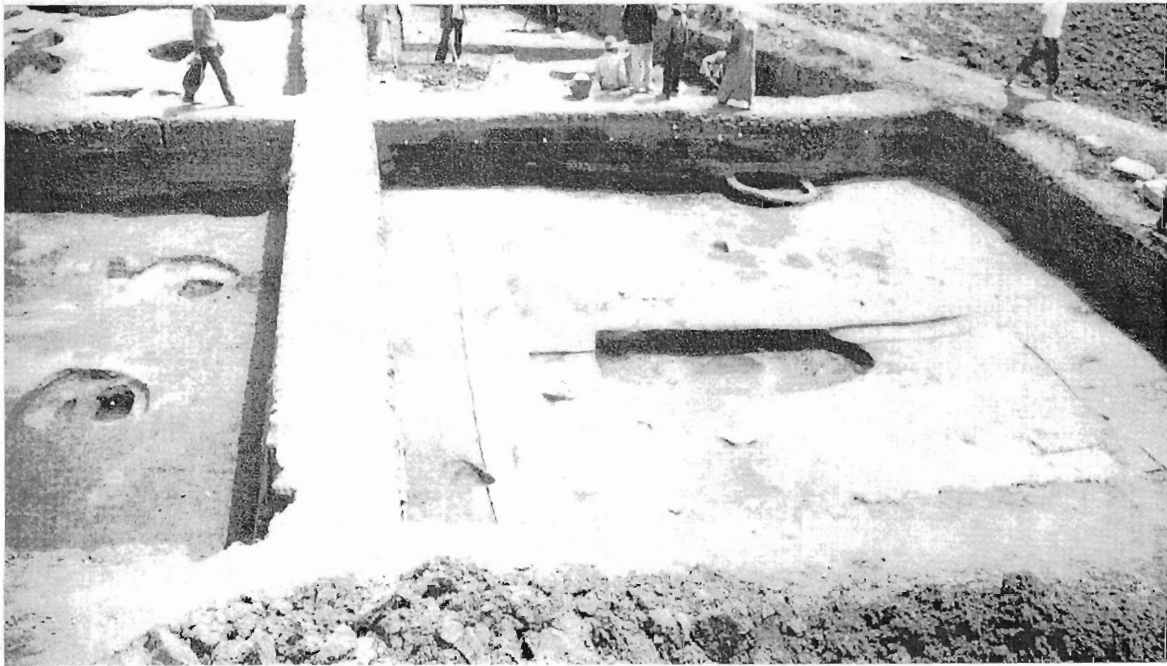




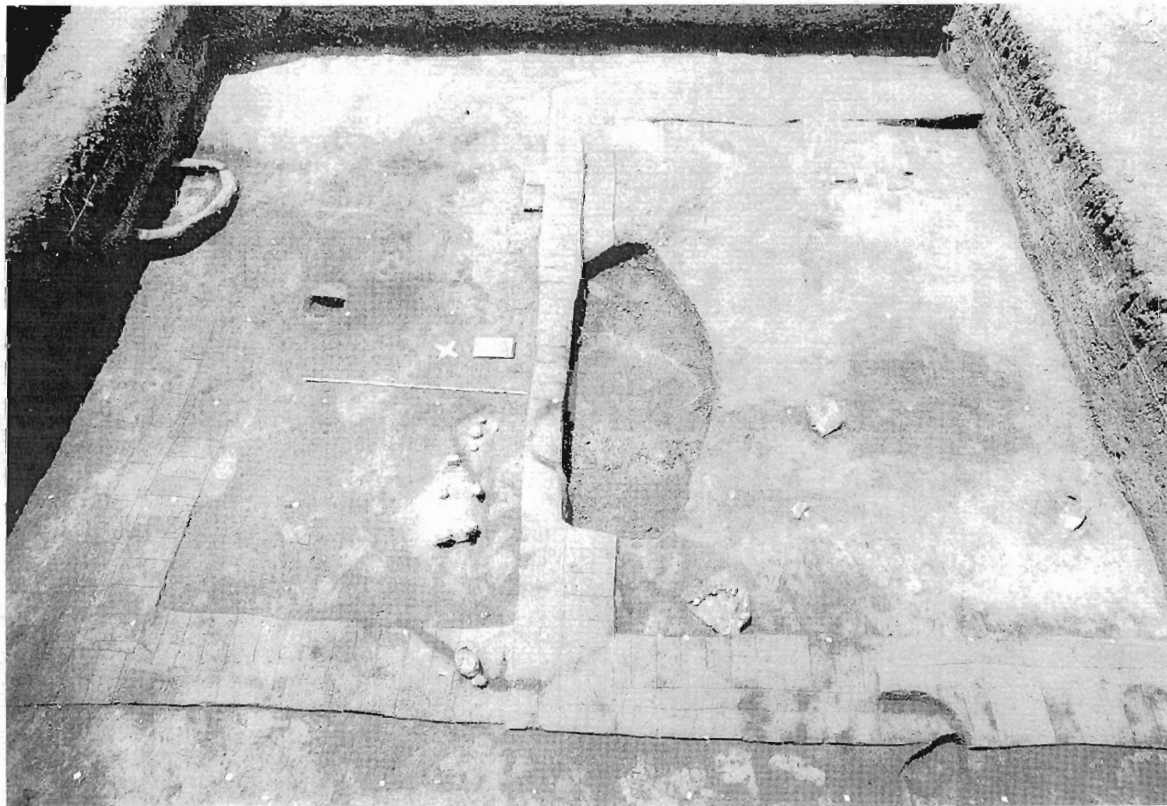
29A-B Huge palatial compound of the early 18th Dynasty in area H/II at  
\*Ezbet Helmi







**30A** Houses of the early 18th Dynasty in area H/I



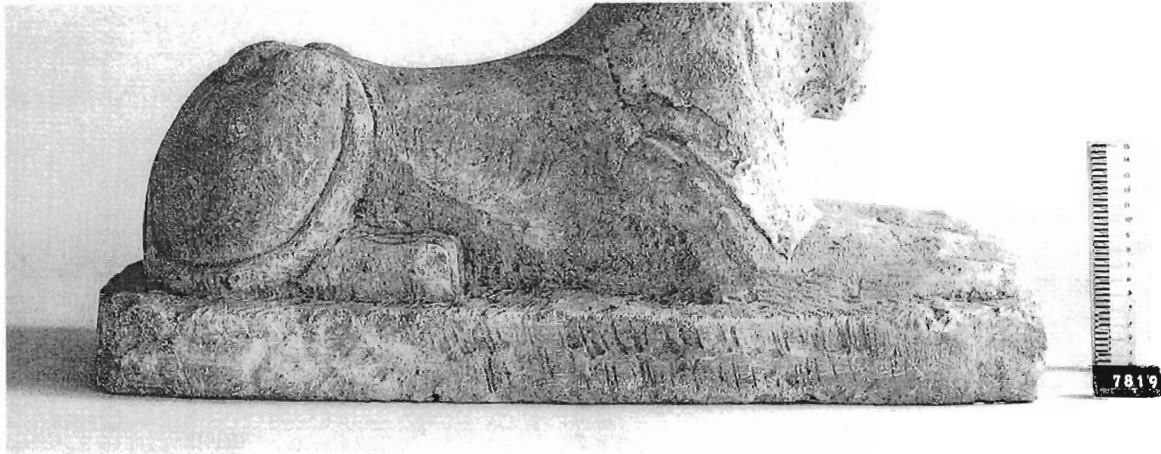
**30B** Oldest building of the 18th Dynasty in area H/I (stratum C).

Plate 31

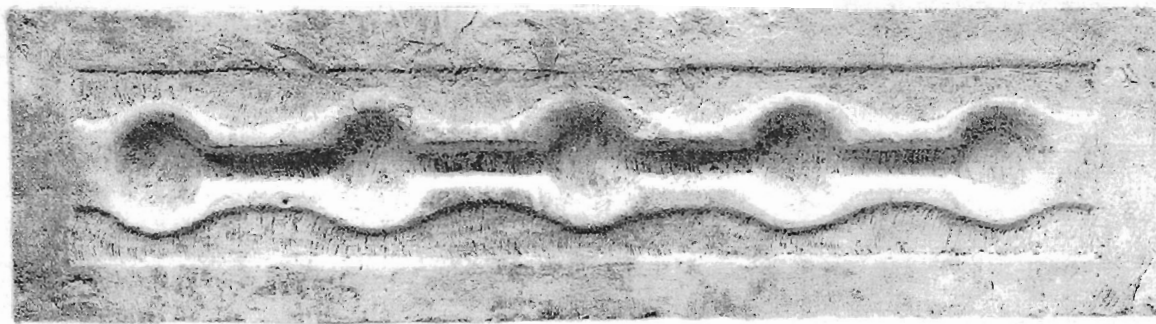


31A Royal scarabs of the early 18th Dynasty found in area H/L.

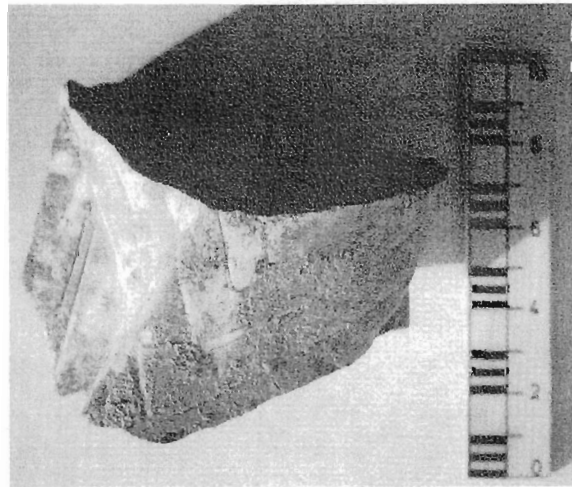
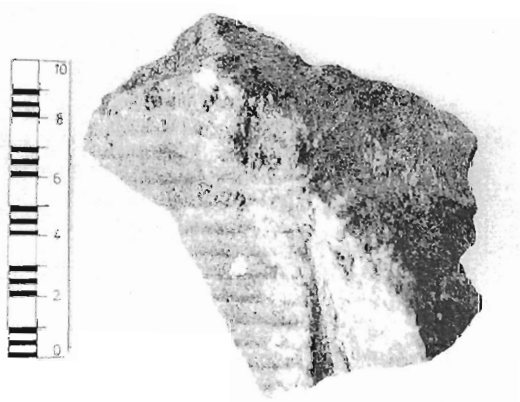




32A Lion statue of limestone, found in debris above the gardens of the late Hyksos Period, area H/I.



32B Libation-basin of limestone from the same area. Length 1.36 m.



32C-D Fragments of royal statues, one of quartzite (C), the other of calcite (D), from the foundations of a New Kingdom wall, area H/I.





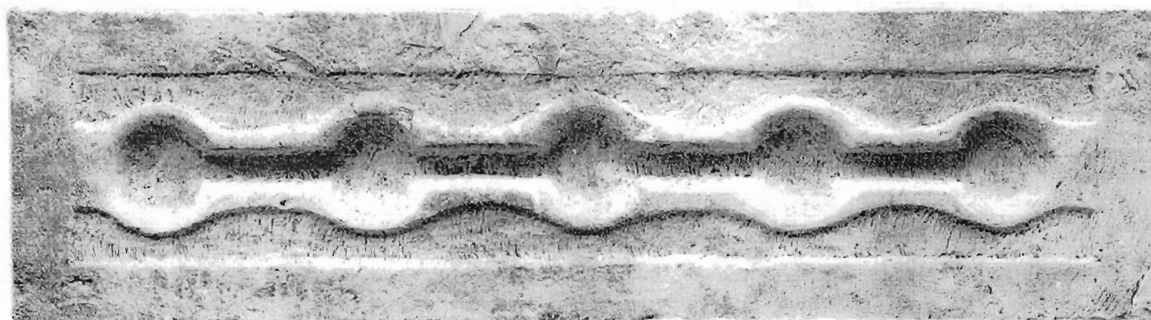
33A-B Fragments of wall-plaster decorated with Minoan paintings, *in situ* in area H/1



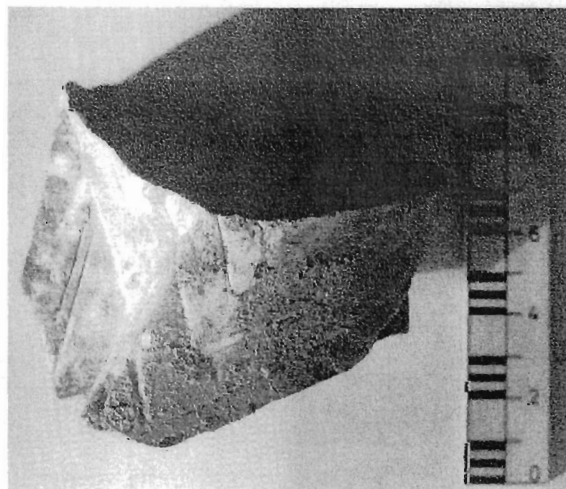
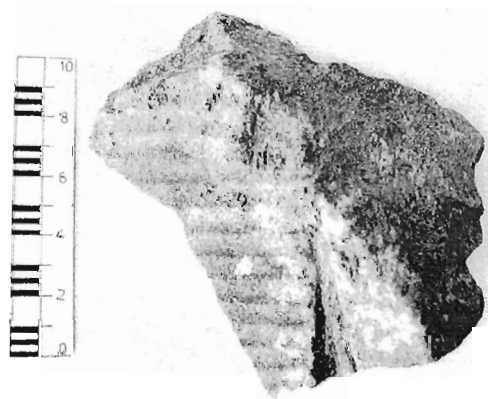
Plate 32



32A Lion statue of limestone. found in debris above the gardens of the late Hyksos Period, area H/I.



32B Libation-basin of limestone from the same area Length 1.36 m



32C-D Fragments of royal statues, one of quartzite (C), the other of calcite (D), from the foundations of a New Kingdom wall, area H/I.

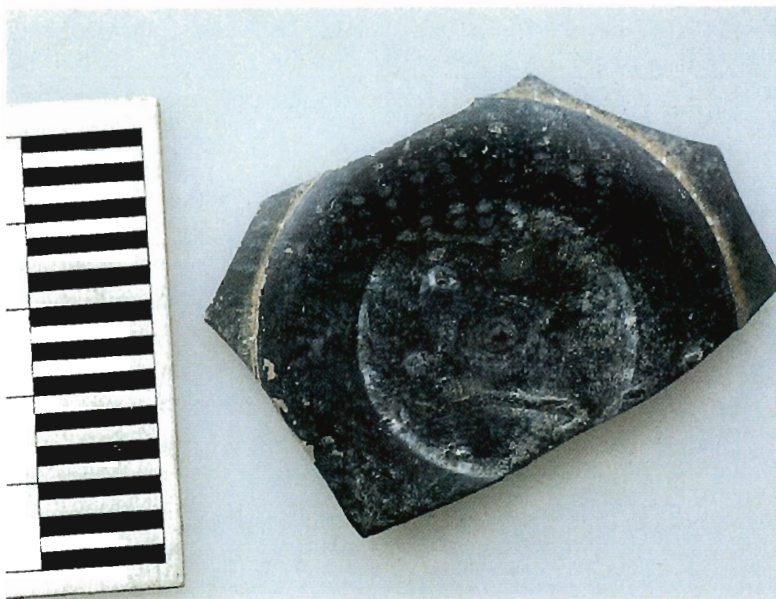


**34A** Accumulation of material including shells and lumps of pumice in a room, possibly a cellar, within a building of the early 18th Dynasty area H/1



**34B** Lumps of pumice found within early 18th Dynasty strata





1A Kamares ware from the palace gardens in area F/I, stratum d/1 (after Walberg 1991b, pl.2).







**IIA** Diadems and jewellery from tombs of the early Hyksos Period.



**IIB** Gold double-necklace of a lady from tomb A/II-m/16 - no. 3 (stratum F).



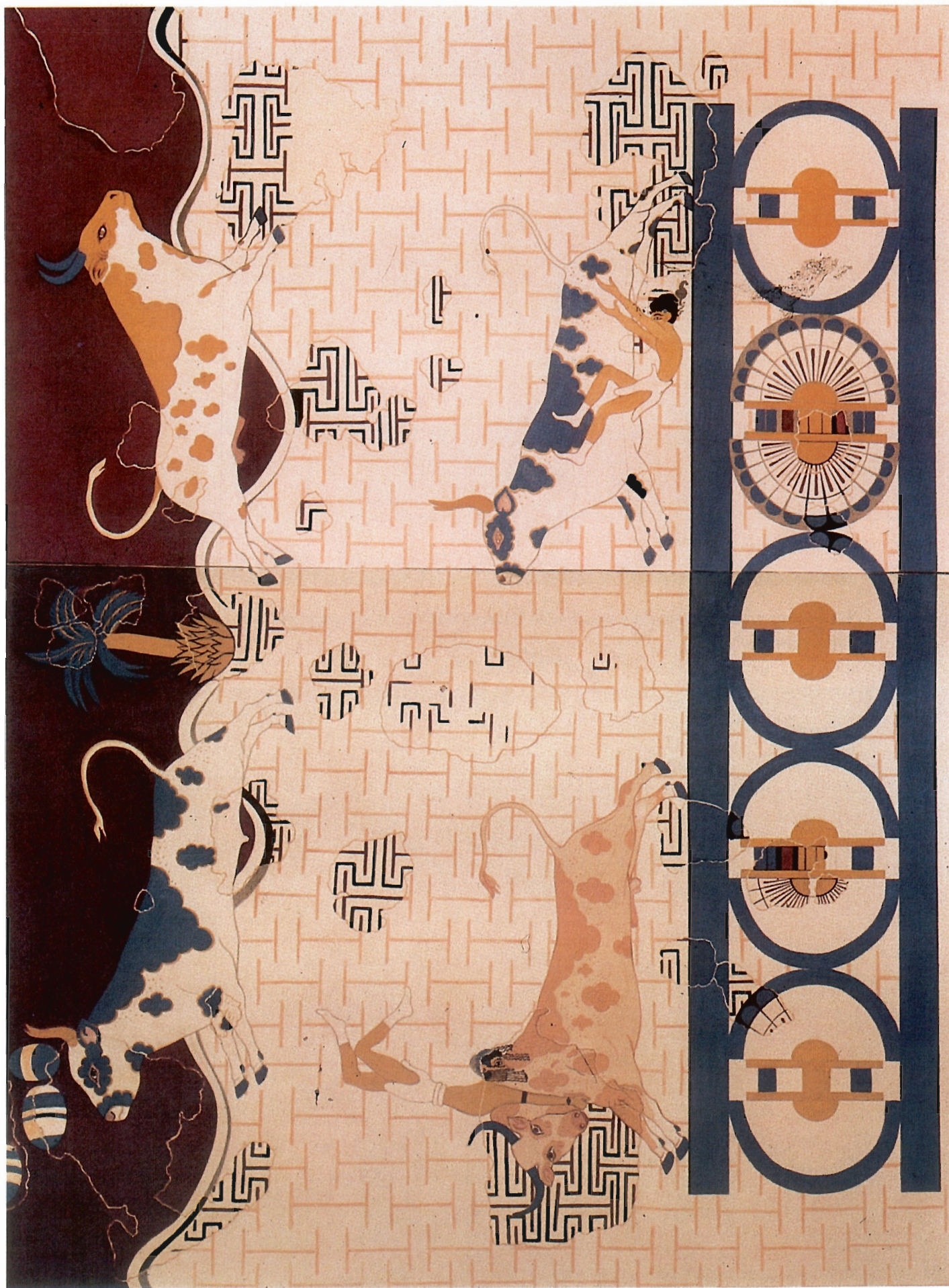


**IIIA** Leaper and bull *en face* against the background of a maze-pattern (wall-painting fragment F4).



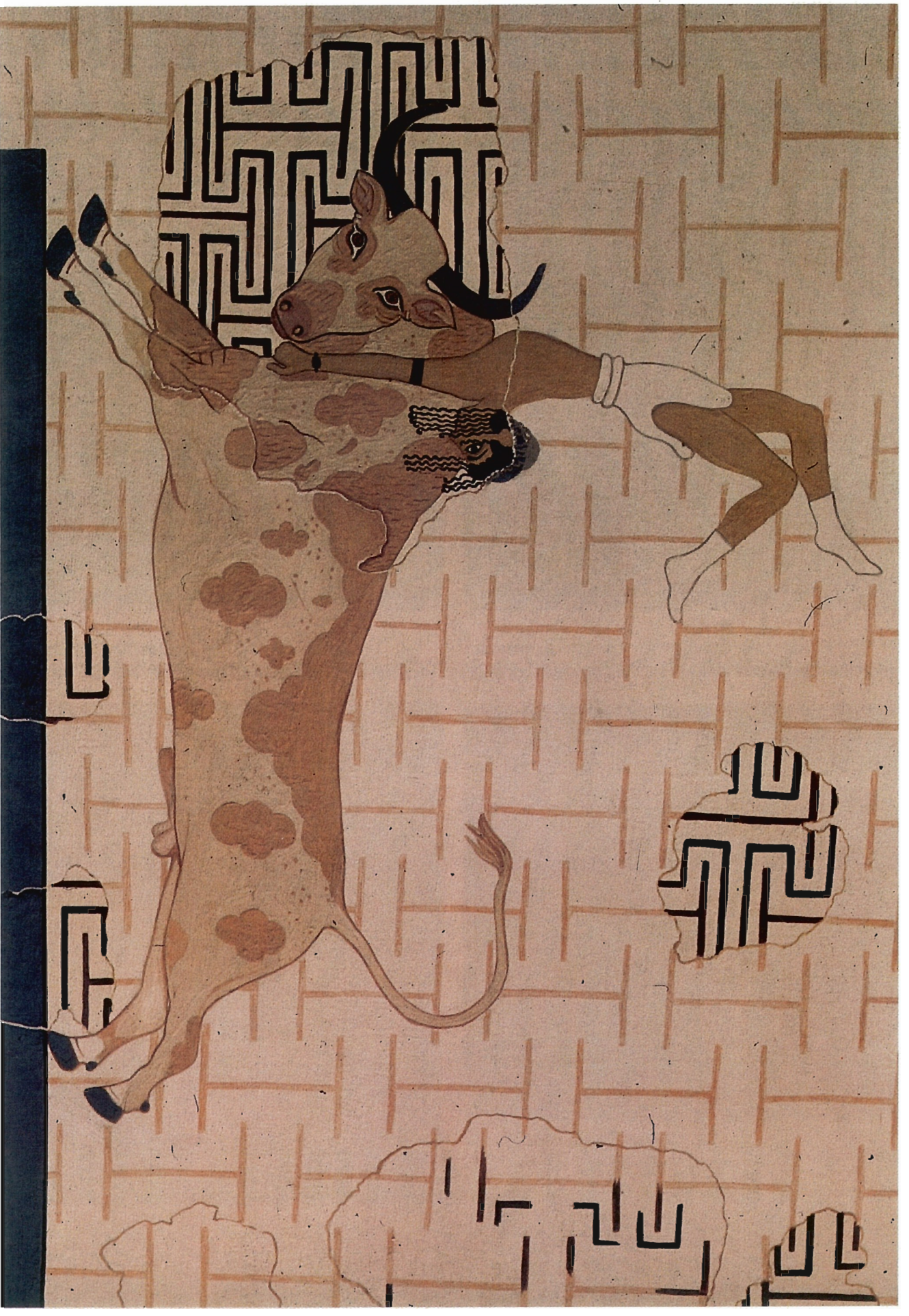
**IIIB** Maze-pattern and half-rosette-triglyphic frieze (wall-painting fragment F10).





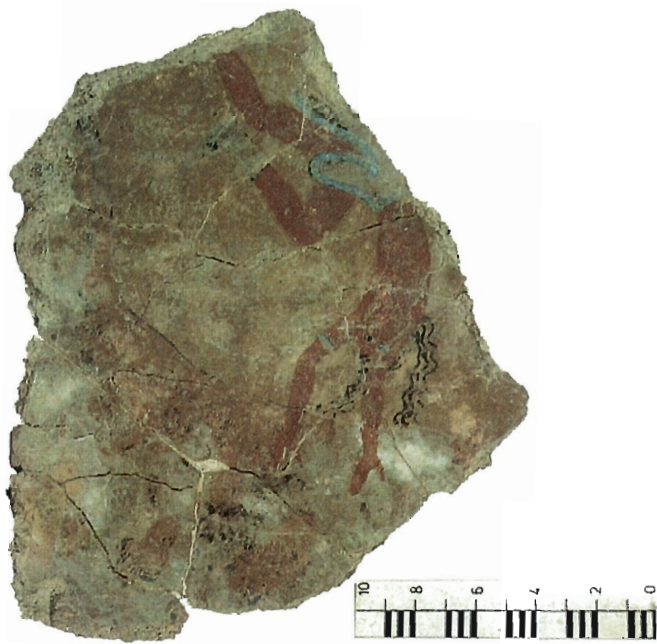
IV Reconstruction of bull-leaping tableau. Drawing by Lyla Pinch-Brock.





V Bull-leaping tableau: detail with *en face* bull. Drawing by Lyla Pinch-Brock.





**VIA** Bull-leaper making an unusual side-leap or whirling leap (wall-painting fragment F5).



**VIB** Downed bull with two bull-grapplers, probably from the same frieze as A (wall-painting fragment F3).



**VIC** Maze-pattern with a striped border (floor-painting fragment F2).



**VID** Acrobat performing near a palm tree (wall-painting fragment F7).



This volume publishes an expanded version of the first Raymond and Beverly Sackler Foundation Distinguished Lecture in Egyptology given by Professor Manfred Bietak at the British Museum in 1992.

Avaris was a Canaanite city on Egyptian soil, situated in the eastern Nile Delta and linked with the Levant by sea and by routes across Sinai. The site of the ancient town lies beside the modern village of Tell el-Dab'a, where Professor Bietak has been directing excavations since 1966. The first Egyptian settlement was founded in the Twelfth Dynasty by King Amenemhat I (c.1963–1934 BC) and shortly afterwards a workers' town was established there. Canaanite occupation of the area commenced in the later part of the Twelfth Dynasty, and subsequently expanded until Avaris became a major city, among the largest in Egypt. It served as the capital of the so-called Hyksos kings who dominated Egypt for over a century, until they were expelled at the beginning of the Eighteenth Dynasty. Thereafter, it was the site of a substantial palatial complex, probably built by King Ahmose, founder of the New Kingdom, its walls, quite remarkably, decorated with Minoan paintings of the highest quality and importance, thousands of fragments of which have been unearthed in recent seasons.

**Manfred Bietak** is Professor of Egyptology at the University of Vienna and Director of the Austrian Archaeological Institute in Cairo. He is a recognised authority on the archaeology of the Middle Bronze Age in Egypt and the eastern Mediterranean. He has also excavated at Sayala in Nubia and directed a major project of excavation and restoration in some of the great Late Period tombs on the west of the Nile at Luxor.

*With 21 colour and 150 black and white illustrations.*